

The Book Of Exodus

Israel Leaves Egypt

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EXODUS

OVERVIEW: GET UP. . . leave. . . take off—these words are good ones for those trapped or enslaved. Some resist their marching orders, however, preferring present surroundings to a new, unknown environment. It's not easy to trade the comfortable security of the known for an uncertain future. But what if God gives the order to move? Will we follow his lead? Exodus describes a series of God's calls and the responses of his people.

Four hundred years had passed since Joseph moved his family to Egypt. These descendants of Abraham had now grown to over two million strong. To Egypt's new Pharaoh, these Hebrews were foreigners, and their numbers were frightening. Pharaoh decided to make them slaves so they wouldn't upset his balance of power. As it turned out, that was his biggest mistake, for God then came to the rescue of his people.

Through a series of strange events, a Hebrew boy named Moses became a prince in Pharaoh's palace and then an outcast in a desert land. God visited Moses in the mysterious flames of a burning bush, and, after some discussion, Moses agreed to return to Egypt to lead God's people out of slavery. Pharaoh was confronted, and, through a cycle of plagues and promises made and broken, Israel was torn from his grasp.

It was no easy task to mobilize this mass of humanity, but they marched out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and into the desert behind Moses and the pillars of cloud and fire. Despite continual evidence of God's love and power, the people complained and began to yearn for their days in Egypt. God provided for their physical and spiritual needs with food and a place to worship, but he also judged their disobedience and unbelief. Then in the dramatic Sinai meeting with Moses, God gave his laws for right living.

God led Moses and the nation of Israel, and he wants to lead us as well. Is he preparing you, like Moses, for a specific task? He will be with you; obey and follow. Is he delivering you from an enemy or a temptation? Trust him, and do what he says.

Have you heard his clear moral directions? Read, study, and obey his Word. Is he calling you to true worship? Discover God's presence in your life, in your home, and in the body of assembled believers. Exodus is the exciting story of God's guidance. Read with the determination to follow God wherever he leads.

THE BLUEPRINT

A. ISRAEL IN EGYPT (Exodus 1:1-12:30)

When the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, God heard their cries and rescued them. We can be confident that God still hears the cries of his people. Just as he delivered the Israelites from their captors, he delivers us from sin, death, and evil.

1. Slavery in Egypt
2. God chooses Moses
3. God sends Moses to Pharaoh
4. Plagues strike Egypt
5. The Passover

Exodus 1:1-5:12

These are the sons of Jacob who went with their father to Egypt, each with his family: [2] Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, [3] Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, [4] Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. [5] Joseph was already down in Egypt. In all, Jacob had seventy direct descendants.

[6] In time, Joseph and each of his brothers died, ending that generation. [7] But their descendants had many children and grandchildren. In fact, they multiplied so quickly that they soon filled the land. [8] Then a new king came to the throne of Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph or what he had done. [9] He told his people, "These Israelites are becoming a threat to us because there are so many of them. [10] We must find a way to put an end to this. If we don't and if war breaks out, they will join our enemies and fight against us. Then they will escape from the country."

[11] So the Egyptians made the Israelites their slaves and put brutal slave drivers over them, hoping to wear them down under heavy burdens. They forced them to build the cities of Pithom and Rameses as supply centers for the king. [12] But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more quickly the Israelites multiplied! The Egyptians soon became alarmed [13] and decided to make their slavery more bitter still. [14] They were ruthless with the Israelites, forcing them to make bricks and mortar and to work long hours in the fields.

[15] Then Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, gave this order to the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah: [16] "When you help the Hebrew women give birth, kill all the boys as soon as they are born. Allow only the baby girls to live." [17] But because the midwives feared God, they refused to obey the king and allowed the boys to live, too.

[18] Then the king called for the midwives. "Why have you done this?" he demanded. "Why have you allowed the boys to live?"

[19] "Sir," they told him, "the Hebrew women are very strong. They have their babies so quickly that we cannot get there in time! They are not slow in giving birth like Egyptian women."

[20] So God blessed the midwives, and the Israelites continued to multiply, growing more and more powerful. [21] And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

[22] Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Throw all the newborn Israelite boys into the Nile River. But you may spare the baby girls."

[2:1] During this time, a man and woman from the tribe of Levi got married. [2] The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw what a beautiful baby he was and kept him hidden for three months. [3] But when she could no longer hide him, she got a little basket made of papyrus reeds and waterproofed it with tar and pitch. She put the baby in the basket and laid it among the reeds along the edge of the Nile River. [4] The baby's sister then stood at a distance, watching to see what would happen to him.

[5] Soon after this, one of Pharaoh's daughters came down to bathe in the river, and her servant girls walked along the riverbank. When the princess saw the little basket among the reeds, she told one of her servant girls to get it for her. [6] As the princess opened it, she found the baby boy. His helpless cries touched her heart. "He must be one of the Hebrew children," she said.

[7] Then the baby's sister approached the princess. "Should I go and find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" she asked.

[8] "Yes, do!" the princess replied. So the girl rushed home and called the baby's mother.

[9] "Take this child home and nurse him for me," the princess told her. "I will pay you for your help." So the baby's mother took her baby home and nursed him.

[10] Later, when he was older, the child's mother brought him back to the princess, who adopted him as her son. The princess named him Moses, for she said, "I drew him out of the water."

[11] Many years later, when Moses had grown up, he went out to visit his people, the Israelites, and he saw how hard they were forced to work. During his visit, he saw an Egyptian beating one of the Hebrew slaves. [12] After looking around to make sure no one was watching, Moses killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand.

[13] The next day, as Moses was out visiting his people again, he saw two Hebrew men fighting. "What are you doing, hitting your neighbor like that?" Moses said to the one in the wrong.

[14] "Who do you think you are?" the man replied. "Who appointed you to be our prince and judge? Do you plan to kill me as you killed that Egyptian yesterday?"

Moses was badly frightened because he realized that everyone knew what he had done. [15] And sure enough, when Pharaoh heard about it, he gave orders to have Moses arrested and killed. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and escaped to the land of Midian.

When Moses arrived in Midian, he sat down beside a well. [16] Now it happened that the priest of Midian had seven daughters who came regularly to this well to draw water and fill the water troughs for their father's flocks. [17] But other shepherds would often come and chase the girls and their flocks away. This time, however, Moses came to their aid, rescuing the girls from the shepherds. Then he helped them draw water for their flocks.

[18] When the girls returned to Reuel, their father, he asked, "How did you get the flocks watered so quickly today?"

[19] "An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds," they told him. "And then he drew water for us and watered our flocks."

[20] "Well, where is he then?" their father asked. "Did you just leave him there? Go and invite him home for a meal!"

[21] Moses was happy to accept the invitation, and he settled down to live with them. In time, Reuel gave Moses one of his daughters, Zipporah, to be his wife. [22] Later they had a baby boy, and Moses named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land."

[23] Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites still groaned beneath their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their pleas for deliverance rose up to God. [24] God heard their cries and remembered his covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. [25] He looked down on the Israelites and felt deep concern for their welfare.

[3:1] One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he went deep into the wilderness near Sinai, the mountain of God. [2] Suddenly, the angel of the Lord appeared to him as a blazing fire in a bush. Moses was amazed because the bush was engulfed in flames, but it didn't burn up. [3] "Amazing!" Moses said to himself. "Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go over to see this."

[4] When the Lord saw that he had caught Moses' attention, God called to him from the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

"Here I am!" Moses replied.

[5] "Do not come any closer," God told him. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground." [6] Then he said, "I am the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he hid his face in his hands because he was afraid to look at God.

[7] Then the Lord told him, "You can be sure I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries for deliverance from their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. [8] So I have come to rescue them from the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own good and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites live.

[9] The cries of the people of Israel have reached me, and I have seen how the Egyptians have oppressed them with heavy tasks. [10] Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You will lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

[11] "But who am I to appear before Pharaoh?" Moses asked God. "How can you expect me to lead the Israelites out of Egypt?"

[12] Then God told him, "I will be with you. And this will serve as proof that I have sent you: When you have brought the Israelites out of Egypt, you will return here to worship God at this very mountain."

[13] But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they won't believe me. They will ask, 'Which god are you talking about? What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?"

[14] God replied, "I Am the One who always is. Just tell them, 'I Am has sent me to you.' "

[15] God also said, "Tell them, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' This will be my name forever; it has always been my name, and it will be used throughout all generations.

[16] "Now go and call together all the leaders of Israel. Tell them, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—appeared to me in a burning bush. He said, "You can be sure that I am watching over you and have seen what is happening to you in Egypt. [17] I promise to rescue you from the oppression of the Egyptians. I will lead you to the land now occupied by the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey." ' "

[18] "The leaders of the people of Israel will accept your message. Then all of you must go straight to the king of Egypt and tell him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us go on a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God.'

[19] "But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go except under heavy pressure. [20] So I will reach out and strike at the heart of Egypt with all kinds of miracles. Then at last he will let you go. [21] And I will see to it that the Egyptians treat you well. They will load you down with gifts so you will not leave empty-handed. [22] The Israelite women will ask for silver and gold jewelry and fine clothing from their Egyptian neighbors and their neighbors' guests. With this clothing, you will dress your sons and daughters. In this way, you will plunder the Egyptians!"

[4:1] But Moses protested again, "Look, they won't believe me! They won't do what I tell them. They'll just say, 'The Lord never appeared to you.' "

[2] Then the Lord asked him, "What do you have there in your hand?"

"A shepherd's staff," Moses replied.

[3] "Throw it down on the ground," the Lord told him. So Moses threw it down, and it became a snake! Moses was terrified, so he turned and ran away.

[4] Then the Lord told him, "Take hold of its tail." So Moses reached out and grabbed it, and it became a shepherd's staff again.

[5] "Perform this sign, and they will believe you," the Lord told him. "Then they will realize that the Lord, the God of their ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—really has appeared to you."

[6] Then the Lord said to Moses, "Put your hand inside your robe." Moses did so, and when he took it out again, his hand was white as snow with leprosy. [7] "Now put your hand back into your robe again," the Lord said. Moses did, and when he took it out this time, it was as healthy as the rest of his body.

[8] "If they do not believe the first miraculous sign, they will believe the second," the Lord said. [9] "And if they do not believe you even after these two signs, then take some water from the Nile River and pour it out on the dry ground. When you do, it will turn into blood."

[10] But Moses pleaded with the Lord, "O Lord, I'm just not a good speaker. I never have been, and I'm not now, even after you have spoken to me. I'm clumsy with words."

[11] "Who makes mouths?" the Lord asked him. "Who makes people so they can speak or not speak, hear or not hear, see or not see? Is it not I, the Lord? [12] Now go, and do as I have told you. I will help you speak well, and I will tell you what to say."

[13] But Moses again pleaded, "Lord, please! Send someone else."

[14] Then the Lord became angry with Moses. "All right," he said. "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? He is a good speaker. And look! He is on his way to meet you now. And when he sees you, he will be very glad. [15] You will talk to him, giving him the words to say. I will help both of you to speak clearly, and I will tell you what to do. [16] Aaron will be your spokesman to the people, and you will be as God to him, telling him what to say. [17] And be sure to take your shepherd's staff along so you can perform the miraculous signs I have shown you."

[18] Then Moses went back home and talked it over with Jethro, his father-in-law. "With your permission," Moses said, "I would like to go back to Egypt to visit my family. I don't even know whether they are still alive."

"Go with my blessing," Jethro replied.

[19] Before Moses left Midian, the Lord said to him, "Do not be afraid to return to Egypt, for all those who wanted to kill you are dead."

[20] So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey, and headed back to the land of Egypt. In his hand he carried the staff of God.

[21] Then the Lord reminded him, "When you arrive back in Egypt, go to Pharaoh and perform the miracles I have empowered you to do. But I will make him stubborn so he will not let the people go. [22] Then you will tell him, 'This is what the Lord says: Israel is my firstborn son. [23] I commanded you to let him go, so he could worship me. But since you have refused, be warned! I will kill your firstborn son!'"

[24] On the journey, when Moses and his family had stopped for the night, the Lord confronted Moses and was about to kill him.

[25] But Zipporah, his wife, took a flint knife and circumcised her son. She threw the foreskin at Moses' feet and said, "What a blood-smearred bridegroom you are to me!" [26] (When she called Moses a "blood-smearred bridegroom," she was referring to the circumcision.) After that, the Lord left him alone.

[27] Now the Lord had said to Aaron, "Go out into the wilderness to meet Moses." So Aaron traveled to the mountain of God, where he found Moses and greeted him warmly.

[28] Moses then told Aaron everything the Lord had commanded them to do and say. And he told him about the miraculous signs they were to perform.

[29] So Moses and Aaron returned to Egypt and called the leaders of Israel to a meeting. [30] Aaron told them everything the Lord had told Moses, and Moses performed the miraculous signs as they watched. [31] The leaders were soon convinced that the Lord had sent Moses and Aaron. And when they realized that the Lord had seen their misery and was deeply concerned for them, they all bowed their heads and worshiped.

[5:1] After this presentation to Israel's leaders, Moses and Aaron went to see Pharaoh. They told him, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, for they must go out into the wilderness to hold a religious festival in my honor.' "

[2] "Is that so?" retorted Pharaoh. "And who is the Lord that I should listen to him and let Israel go? I don't know the Lord, and I will not let Israel go."

[3] But Aaron and Moses persisted. "The God of the Hebrews has met with us," they declared. "Let us take a three-day trip into the wilderness so we can offer sacrifices to the Lord our God. If we don't, we will surely die by disease or the sword."

[4] "Who do you think you are," Pharaoh shouted, "distracting the people from their tasks? Get back to work! [5] Look, there are many people here in Egypt, and you are stopping them from doing their work."

[6] That same day Pharaoh sent this order to the slave drivers and foremen he had set over the people of Israel: [7] "Do not supply the people with any more straw for making bricks. Let them get it themselves! [8] But don't reduce their production quotas by a single brick. They obviously don't have enough to do. If they did, they wouldn't be talking about going into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to their God. [9] Load them down with more work. Make them sweat! That will teach them to listen to these liars!"

[10] So the slave drivers and foremen informed the people: "Pharaoh has ordered us not to provide straw for you. [11] Go and get it yourselves. Find it wherever you can. But you must produce just as many bricks as before!" [12] So the people scattered throughout the land in search of straw.

B. ISRAEL IN THE DESERT (Exodus 12:31-18:27)

After crossing the Red Sea, the Israelites became quarrelsome and discontent. Like the Israelites, we find it easy to complain and be dissatisfied. Christians still have struggles, but we should never allow difficulties and unpleasant circumstances to turn us away from trusting God.

1. The exodus
2. Crossing the sea
3. Complaining in the desert

Exodus 12:31-18:27

Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron during the night. "Leave us!" he cried. "Go away, all of you! Go and serve the Lord as you have requested. [32] Take your flocks and herds, and be gone. Go, but give me a blessing as you leave." [33] All the Egyptians urged the people of Israel to get out of the land as quickly as possible, for they thought, "We will all die!"

[34] The Israelites took with them their bread dough made without yeast. They wrapped their kneading bowls in their spare clothing and carried them on their shoulders. [35] And the people of Israel did as Moses had instructed and asked the Egyptians for clothing and articles of silver and gold. [36] The Lord caused the Egyptians to look favorably on the Israelites, and they gave the Israelites whatever they asked for. So, like a victorious army, they plundered the Egyptians!

[37] That night the people of Israel left Rameses and started for Succoth. There were about 600,000 men, plus all the women and children. And they were all traveling on foot. [38] Many people who were not Israelites went with them, along with the many flocks and herds. [39] Whenever they stopped to eat, they baked bread from the yeastless dough they had brought from Egypt. It was made without yeast because the people were rushed out of Egypt and had no time to wait for bread to rise.

[40] The people of Israel had lived in Egypt for 430 years. [41] In fact, it was on the last day of the 430th year that all the Lord's forces left the land. [42] This night had been reserved by the Lord to bring his people out from the land of Egypt, so this same night now belongs to him. It must be celebrated every year, from generation to generation, to remember the Lord's deliverance.

[43] Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "These are the regulations for the festival of Passover. No foreigners are allowed to eat the Passover lamb. [44] But any slave who has been purchased may eat it if he has been circumcised. [45] Hired servants and visiting foreigners may not eat it. [46] All who eat the lamb must eat it together in one house. You must not carry any of its meat outside, and you may not break any of its bones. [47] The whole community of Israel must celebrate this festival at the same time.

[48] "If there are foreigners living among you who want to celebrate the Lord's Passover, let all the males be circumcised. Then they may come and celebrate the Passover with you. They will be treated just as if they had been born among you. But an uncircumcised male may never eat of the Passover lamb. [49] This law applies to everyone, whether a native-born Israelite or a foreigner who has settled among you."

[50] So the people of Israel followed all the Lord's instructions to Moses and Aaron. [51] And that very day the Lord began to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, division by division.

[13:1] Then the Lord said to Moses, [2] "Dedicate to me all the firstborn sons of Israel and every firstborn male animal. They are mine."

[3] So Moses said to the people, "This is a day to remember forever—the day you left Egypt, the place of your slavery. For the Lord has brought you out by his mighty power. (Remember, you are not to use any yeast.) [4] This day in early spring will be the anniversary of your exodus. [5] You must celebrate this day when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites. This is the land he swore to give your ancestors—a land flowing with milk and honey. [6] For seven days you will eat only bread without yeast. Then on the seventh day, you will celebrate a great feast to the Lord. [7] Eat only bread without yeast during those seven days. In fact, there must be no yeast in your homes or anywhere within the borders of your land during this time.

[8] "During these festival days each year, you must explain to your children why you are celebrating. Say to them, 'This is a celebration of what the Lord did for us when we left Egypt.' [9] This annual festival will be a visible reminder to you, like a mark branded on your hands or your forehead. Let it remind you always to keep the Lord's instructions in your minds and on your lips. After all, it was the Lord who rescued you from Egypt with great power.

[10] "So celebrate this festival at the appointed time each year. [11] And remember these instructions when the Lord brings you into the land he swore to give your ancestors long ago, the land where the Canaanites are now living. [12] All firstborn sons and firstborn male animals must be presented to the Lord. [13] A firstborn male donkey may be redeemed from the Lord by presenting a lamb in its place. But if you decide not to make the exchange, the donkey must be killed by breaking its neck. However, you must redeem every firstborn son.

[14] "And in the future, your children will ask you, 'What does all this mean?' Then you will tell them, 'With mighty power the Lord brought us out of Egypt from our slavery. [15] Pharaoh refused to let us go, so the Lord killed all the firstborn males throughout the land of Egypt, both people and animals. That is why we now offer all the firstborn males to the Lord—except that the firstborn sons are always redeemed.' [16] Again I say, this ceremony will be like a mark branded on your hands or your forehead. It is a visible reminder that it was the Lord who brought you out of Egypt with great power."

[17] When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them on the road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest way from Egypt to the Promised Land. God said, "If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." [18] So God led them along a route through the wilderness toward the Red Sea, and the Israelites left Egypt like a marching army.

[19] Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel swear that they would take his bones with them when God led them out of Egypt—as he was sure God would.

[20] Leaving Succoth, they camped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. [21] The Lord guided them by a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night. That way they could travel whether it was day or night. [22] And the Lord did not remove the pillar of cloud or pillar of fire from their sight.

[14:1] Then the Lord gave these instructions to Moses: [2] "Tell the people to march toward Pi-hahiroth between Migdol and the sea. Camp there along the shore, opposite Baal-zephon. [3] Then Pharaoh will think, 'Those Israelites are confused. They are trapped between the wilderness and the sea!' [4] And once again I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after you. I have planned this so I will receive great glory at the expense of Pharaoh and his armies. After this, the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord!" So the Israelites camped there as they were told.

[5] When word reached the king of Egypt that the Israelites were not planning to return to Egypt after three days, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds. "What have we done, letting all these slaves get away?" they asked. [6] So Pharaoh called out his troops and led the chase in his chariot. [7] He took with him six hundred of Egypt's best chariots, along with the rest of the chariots of Egypt, each with a commander. [8] The Lord continued to strengthen Pharaoh's resolve, and he chased after the people of Israel who had escaped so defiantly. [9] All the forces in Pharaoh's army—all his horses, chariots, and charioteers—were used in the chase. The Egyptians caught up with the people of Israel as they were camped beside the shore near Pi-hahiroth, across from Baal-zephon.

[10] As Pharaoh and his army approached, the people of Israel could see them in the distance, marching toward them. The people began to panic, and they cried out to the Lord for help.

[11] Then they turned against Moses and complained, "Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness? Weren't there enough graves for us in Egypt? Why did you make us leave? [12] Didn't we tell you to leave us alone while we were still in Egypt? Our Egyptian slavery was far better than dying out here in the wilderness!"

[13] But Moses told the people, "Don't be afraid. Just stand where you are and watch the Lord rescue you. The Egyptians that you see today will never be seen again. [14] The Lord himself will fight for you. You won't have to lift a finger in your defense!"

[15] Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the people to get moving! [16] Use your shepherd's staff—hold it out over the water, and a path will open up before you through the sea. Then all the people of Israel will walk through on dry ground. [17] Yet I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will follow the Israelites into the sea. Then I will receive great glory at the expense of Pharaoh and his armies, chariots, and charioteers. [18] When I am finished with Pharaoh and his army, all Egypt will know that I am the Lord!"

[19] Then the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel, moved to a position behind them, and the pillar of cloud also moved around behind them. [20] The cloud settled between the Israelite and Egyptian camps. As night came, the pillar of cloud turned into a pillar of fire, lighting the Israelite camp. But the cloud became darkness to the Egyptians, and they couldn't find the Israelites.

[21] Then Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the Lord opened up a path through the water with a strong east wind. The wind blew all that night, turning the seabed into dry land. [22] So the people of Israel walked through the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side! [23] Then the Egyptians—all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and charioteers—followed them across the bottom of the sea. [24] But early in the morning, the Lord looked down on the Egyptian army from the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw them into confusion. [25] Their chariot wheels began to come off, making their chariots impossible to drive. "Let's get out of here!" the Egyptians shouted. "The Lord is fighting for Israel against us!"

[26] When all the Israelites were on the other side, the Lord said to Moses, "Raise your hand over the sea again. Then the waters will rush back over the Egyptian chariots and charioteers." [27] So as the sun began to rise, Moses raised his hand over the sea. The water roared back into its usual place, and the Lord swept the terrified Egyptians into the surging currents. [28] The waters covered all the chariots and charioteers—the entire army of Pharaoh. Of all the Egyptians who had chased the Israelites into the sea, not a single one survived.

[29] The people of Israel had walked through the middle of the sea on dry land, as the water stood up like a wall on both sides. [30] This was how the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians that day. And the Israelites could see the bodies of the Egyptians washed up on the shore. [31] When the people of Israel saw the mighty power that the Lord had displayed against the Egyptians, they feared the Lord and put their faith in him and his servant Moses.

[15:1] Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord:

"I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;
he has thrown both horse and rider into the sea.

[2] The Lord is my strength and my song;
he has become my victory.

He is my God, and I will praise him;
he is my father's God, and I will exalt him!

[3] The Lord is a warrior;
yes, the Lord is his name!

[4] Pharaoh's chariots and armies,
he has thrown into the sea.

The very best of Pharaoh's officers
have been drowned in the Red Sea.

[5] The deep waters have covered them;
they sank to the bottom like a stone.

[6] "Your right hand, O Lord,
is glorious in power.

Your right hand, O Lord,
dashes the enemy to pieces.

[7] In the greatness of your majesty,
you overthrew those who rose against you.

Your anger flashed forth;

it consumed them as fire burns straw.

[8] At the blast of your breath, the waters piled up!
The surging waters stood straight like a wall;
in the middle of the sea the waters became hard.

[9] "The enemy said, 'I will chase them,
catch up with them, and destroy them.
I will divide the plunder,
avenging myself against them.

I will unsheath my sword;
my power will destroy them.'

[10] But with a blast of your breath,
the sea covered them.

They sank like lead
in the mighty waters.

[11] "Who else among the gods is like you, O Lord?
Who is glorious in holiness like you—
so awesome in splendor,
performing such wonders?

[12] You raised up your hand,
and the earth swallowed our enemies.

[13] "With unfailing love you will lead
this people whom you have ransomed.
You will guide them in your strength
to the place where your holiness dwells.

[14] The nations will hear and tremble;
anguish will grip the people of Philistia.

[15] The leaders of Edom will be terrified;
the nobles of Moab will tremble.

All the people of Canaan will melt with fear;

[16] terror and dread will overcome them.

Because of your great power,

they will be silent like a stone,

until your people pass by, O Lord,

until the people whom you purchased pass by.

[17] You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain—

the place you have made as your home, O Lord,

the sanctuary, O Lord that your hands have made.

[18] The Lord will reign forever and ever!"

[19] When Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and charioteers rushed into the sea, the Lord brought the water crashing down on them. But the people of Israel had walked through on dry land!

[20] Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine and led all the women in rhythm and dance. [21] And Miriam sang this song:

"I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;
he has thrown both horse and rider into the sea."

[22] Then Moses led the people of Israel away from the Red Sea, and they moved out into the Shur Desert. They traveled in this desert for three days without water. [23] When they came to Marah, they finally found water. But the people couldn't drink it because it was bitter. (That is why the place was called Marah, which means "bitter.")

[24] Then the people turned against Moses. "What are we going to drink?" they demanded.

[25] So Moses cried out to the Lord for help, and the Lord showed him a branch. Moses took the branch and threw it into the water. This made the water good to drink.

It was there at Marah that the Lord laid before them the following conditions to test their faithfulness to him: [26] "If you will listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his sight, obeying his commands and laws, then I will not make you suffer the diseases I sent on the Egyptians; for I am the Lord who heals you."

[27] After leaving Marah, they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees. They camped there beside the springs.

[16:1] Then they left Elim and journeyed into the Sin Desert, between Elim and Mount Sinai. They arrived there a month after leaving Egypt. [2] There, too, the whole community of Israel spoke bitterly against Moses and Aaron.

[3] "Oh, that we were back in Egypt," they moaned. "It would have been better if the Lord had killed us there! At least there we had plenty to eat. But now you have brought us into this desert to starve us to death."

[4] Then the Lord said to Moses, "Look, I'm going to rain down food from heaven for you. The people can go out each day and pick up as much food as they need for that day. I will test them in this to see whether they will follow my instructions. [5] Tell them to pick up twice as much as usual on the sixth day of each week."

[6] Then Moses and Aaron called a meeting of all the people of Israel and told them, "In the evening you will realize that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt. [7] In the morning you will see the glorious presence of the Lord. He has heard your complaints, which are against the Lord and not against us. [8] The Lord will give you meat to eat in the evening and bread in the morning, for he has heard all your complaints against him. Yes, your complaints are against the Lord, not against us."

[9] Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say this to the entire community of Israel: 'Come into the Lord's presence, and hear his reply to your complaints.'" [10] And as Aaron spoke to the people, they looked out toward the desert. Within the guiding cloud, they could see the awesome glory of the Lord.

[11] And the Lord said to Moses, [12] "I have heard the people's complaints. Now tell them, 'In the evening you will have meat to eat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.' "

[13] That evening vast numbers of quail arrived and covered the camp. The next morning the desert all around the camp was wet with dew. [14] When the dew disappeared later in the morning, thin flakes, white like frost, covered the ground. [15] The Israelites were puzzled when they saw it. "What is it?" they asked.

And Moses told them, "It is the food the Lord has given you. [16] The Lord says that each household should gather as much as it needs. Pick up two quarts for each person."

[17] So the people of Israel went out and gathered this food—some getting more, and some getting less. [18] By gathering two quarts for each person, everyone had just enough. Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little had enough. Each family had just what it needed.

[19] Then Moses told them, "Do not keep any of it overnight." [20] But, of course, some of them didn't listen and kept some of it until morning. By then it was full of maggots and had a terrible smell. And Moses was very angry with them.

[21] The people gathered the food morning by morning, each family according to its need. And as the sun became hot, the food they had not picked up melted and disappeared. [22] On the sixth day, there was twice as much as usual on the ground—four quarts for each person instead of two. The leaders of the people came and asked Moses why this had happened. [23] He replied, "The Lord has appointed tomorrow as a day of rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. On this day we will rest from our normal daily tasks. So bake or boil as much as you want today, and set aside what is left for tomorrow."

[24] The next morning the leftover food was wholesome and good, without maggots or odor. [25] Moses said, "This is your food for today, for today is a Sabbath to the Lord. There will be no food on the ground today. [26] Gather the food for six days, but the seventh day is a Sabbath. There will be no food on the ground for you on that day."

[27] Some of the people went out anyway to gather food, even though it was the Sabbath day. But there was none to be found. [28] "How long will these people refuse to obey my commands and instructions?" the Lord asked Moses. [29] "Do they not realize that I have given them the seventh day, the Sabbath, as a day of rest? That is why I give you twice as much food on the sixth day, so there will be enough for two days. On the Sabbath day you must stay in your places. Do not pick up food from the ground on that day." [30] So the people rested on the seventh day.

[31] In time, the food became known as manna. It was white like coriander seed, and it tasted like honey cakes.

[32] Then Moses gave them this command from the Lord: "Take two quarts of manna and keep it forever as a treasured memorial of the Lord's provision. By doing this, later generations will be able to see the bread that the Lord provided in the wilderness when he brought you out of Egypt."

[33] Moses said to Aaron, "Get a container and put two quarts of manna into it. Then store it in a sacred place as a reminder for all future generations." [34] Aaron did this, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. He eventually placed it for safekeeping in the Ark of the Covenant. [35] So the people of Israel ate manna for forty years until they arrived in the land of Canaan, where there were crops to eat.

[36] (The container used to measure the manna was an omer, which held about two quarts.)

[17:1] At the Lord's command, the people of Israel left the Sin Desert and moved from place to place. Eventually they came to Rephidim, but there was no water to be found there. [2] So once more the people grumbled and complained to Moses. "Give us water to drink!" they demanded.

"Quiet!" Moses replied. "Why are you arguing with me? And why are you testing the Lord?"

[3] But tormented by thirst, they continued to complain, "Why did you ever take us out of Egypt? Why did you bring us here? We, our children, and our livestock will all die!"

[4] Then Moses pleaded with the Lord, "What should I do with these people? They are about to stone me!"

[5] The Lord said to Moses, "Take your shepherd's staff, the one you used when you struck the water of the Nile. Then call some of the leaders of Israel and walk on ahead of the people. [6] I will meet you by the rock at Mount Sinai. Strike the rock, and water will come pouring out. Then the people will be able to drink." Moses did just as he was told; and as the leaders looked on, water gushed out.

[7] Moses named the place Massah—"the place of testing"—and Meribah—"the place of arguing"—because the people of Israel argued with Moses and tested the Lord by saying, "Is the Lord going to take care of us or not?"

[8] While the people of Israel were still at Rephidim, the warriors of Amalek came to fight against them. [9] Moses commanded Joshua, "Call the Israelites to arms, and fight the army of Amalek. Tomorrow, I will stand at the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."

[10] So Joshua did what Moses had commanded. He led his men out to fight the army of Amalek. Meanwhile Moses, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of a nearby hill. [11] As long as Moses held up the staff with his hands, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites gained the upper hand. [12] Moses' arms finally became too tired to hold up the staff any longer. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side, holding up his hands until sunset. [13] As a result, Joshua and his troops were able to crush the army of Amalek.

[14] Then the Lord instructed Moses, "Write this down as a permanent record, and announce it to Joshua: I will blot out every trace of Amalek from under heaven." [15] Moses built an altar there and called it "The Lord Is My Banner." [16] He said, "They have dared to raise their fist against the Lord's throne, so now the Lord will be at war with Amalek generation after generation."

[18:1] Word soon reached Jethro, the priest of Midian and Moses' father-in-law, about all the wonderful things God had done for Moses and his people, the Israelites. He had heard about how the Lord had brought them safely out of Egypt.

[2] Some time before this, Moses had sent his wife, Zipporah, and his two sons to live with Jethro, his father-in-law. [3] The name of Moses' first son was Gershom, for Moses had said when the boy was born, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land."

[4] The name of his second son was Eliezer, for Moses had said at his birth, "The God of my fathers was my helper; he delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh." [5] Jethro now came to visit Moses, and he brought Moses' wife and two sons with him. They arrived while Moses and the people were camped near the mountain of God. [6] Moses was told, "Jethro, your father-in-law, has come to visit you. Your wife and your two sons are with him."

[7] So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law. He bowed to him respectfully and greeted him warmly. They asked about each other's health and then went to Moses' tent to talk further. [8] Moses told his father-in-law about everything the Lord had done to rescue Israel from Pharaoh and the Egyptians. He also told him about the problems they had faced along the way and how the Lord had delivered his people from all their troubles. [9] Jethro was delighted when he heard about all that the Lord had done for Israel as he brought them out of Egypt.

[10] "Praise be to the Lord," Jethro said, "for he has saved you from the Egyptians and from Pharaoh. He has rescued Israel from the power of Egypt! [11] I know now that the Lord is greater than all other gods, because his people have escaped from the proud and cruel Egyptians."

[12] Then Jethro presented a burnt offering and gave sacrifices to God. As Jethro was doing this, Aaron and the leaders of Israel came out to meet him. They all joined him in a sacrificial meal in God's presence.

[13] The next day, Moses sat as usual to hear the people's complaints against each other. They were lined up in front of him from morning till evening.

[14] When Moses' father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "Why are you trying to do all this alone? The people have been standing here all day to get your help."

[15] Moses replied, "Well, the people come to me to seek God's guidance. [16] When an argument arises, I am the one who settles the case. I inform the people of God's decisions and teach them his laws and instructions."

[17] "This is not good!" his father-in-law exclaimed. [18] "You're going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself. [19] Now let me give you a word of advice, and may God be with you. You should continue to be the people's representative before God, bringing him their questions to be decided. [20] You should tell them God's decisions, teach them God's laws and instructions, and show them how to conduct their lives. [21] But find some capable, honest men who fear God and hate bribes. Appoint them as judges over groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten.

[22] These men can serve the people, resolving all the ordinary cases. Anything that is too important or too complicated can be brought to you. But they can take care of the smaller matters themselves. They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you. [23] If you follow this advice, and if God directs you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home in peace."

[24] Moses listened to his father-in-law's advice and followed his suggestions. [25] He chose capable men from all over Israel and made them judges over the people. They were put in charge of groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. [26] These men were constantly available to administer justice. They brought the hard cases to Moses, but they judged the smaller matters themselves.

[27] Soon after this, Moses said good-bye to his father-in-law, who returned to his own land.

C. ISRAEL AT SINAI (Exodus 19:1-40:38)

God revealed his law to the Israelites at Sinai. Through the law, they learned more about what God is like and how he expected his people to live. The law is still instructional for us, for it exposes our sin and shows us God's standard for living.

1. Giving the law
2. Tabernacle instructions
3. Breaking the law
4. Tabernacle construction

Exodus 19:1-40:38

The Israelites arrived in the wilderness of Sinai exactly two months after they left Egypt. [2] After breaking camp at Rephidim, they came to the base of Mount Sinai and set up camp there.

[3] Then Moses climbed the mountain to appear before God. The Lord called out to him from the mountain and said, "Give these instructions to the descendants of Jacob, the people of Israel: [4] 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians. You know how I brought you to myself and carried you on eagle's wings. [5] Now if you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the nations of the earth; for all the earth belongs to me. [6] And you will be to me a kingdom of priests, my holy nation.' Give this message to the Israelites."

[7] Moses returned from the mountain and called together the leaders of the people and told them what the Lord had said. [8] They all responded together, "We will certainly do everything the Lord asks of us." So Moses brought the people's answer back to the Lord.

[9] Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a thick cloud so the people themselves can hear me as I speak to you. Then they will always have confidence in you."

Moses told the Lord what the people had said.

[10] Then the Lord told Moses, "Go down and prepare the people for my visit. Purify them today and tomorrow, and have them wash their clothing. [11] Be sure they are ready on the third day, for I will come down upon Mount Sinai as all the people watch. [12] Set boundary lines that the people may not pass. Warn them, 'Be careful! Do not go up on the mountain or even touch its boundaries. Those who do will certainly die! [13] Any people or animals that cross the boundary must be stoned to death or shot with arrows. They must not be touched by human hands.' The people must stay away from the mountain until they hear one long blast from the ram's horn. Then they must gather at the foot of the mountain."

[14] So Moses went down to the people. He purified them for worship and had them wash their clothing. [15] He told them, "Get ready for an important event two days from now. And until then, abstain from having sexual intercourse."

[16] On the morning of the third day, there was a powerful thunder and lightning storm, and a dense cloud came down upon the mountain. There was a long, loud blast from a ram's horn, and all the people trembled. [17] Moses led them out from the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. [18] All Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the Lord had descended on it in the form of fire. The smoke billowed into the sky like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain shook with a violent earthquake. [19] As the horn blast grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God thundered his reply for all to hear. [20] The Lord came down on the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses climbed the mountain.

[21] Then the Lord told Moses, "Go back down and warn the people not to cross the boundaries. They must not come up here to see the Lord, for those who do will die. [22] Even the priests who regularly come near to the Lord must purify themselves, or I will destroy them."

[23] "But, Lord, the people cannot come up on the mountain!" Moses protested. "You already told them not to. You told me to set boundaries around the mountain and to declare it off limits."

[24] But the Lord said, "Go down anyway and bring Aaron back with you. In the meantime, do not let the priests or the people cross the boundaries to come up here. If they do, I will punish them."

[25] So Moses went down to the people and told them what the Lord had said.

[20:1] Then God instructed the people as follows:

[2] "I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from slavery in Egypt.

[3] "Do not worship any other gods besides me.

[4] "Do not make idols of any kind, whether in the shape of birds or animals or fish. [5] You must never worship or bow down to them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not share your affection with any other god! I do not leave unpunished the sins of those who hate me, but I punish the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations. [6] But I lavish my love on those who love me and obey my commands, even for a thousand generations.

[7] "Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God. The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name.

[8] "Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. [9] Six days a week are set apart for your daily duties and regular work, [10] but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day no one in your household may do any kind of work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. [11] For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; then he rested on the seventh day. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.

[12] "Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the Lord your God will give you.

[13] "Do not murder.

[14] "Do not commit adultery.

[15] "Do not steal.

[16] "Do not testify falsely against your neighbor.

[17] "Do not covet your neighbor's house. Do not covet your neighbor's wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else your neighbor owns."

[18] When the people heard the thunder and the loud blast of the horn, and when they saw the lightning and the smoke billowing from the mountain, they stood at a distance, trembling with fear.

[19] And they said to Moses, "You tell us what God says, and we will listen. But don't let God speak directly to us. If he does, we will die!"

[20] "Don't be afraid," Moses said, "for God has come in this way to show you his awesome power. From now on, let your fear of him keep you from sinning!"

[21] As the people stood in the distance, Moses entered into the deep darkness where God was.

[22] And the Lord said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: You are witnesses that I have spoken to you from heaven. [23] Remember, you must not make or worship idols of silver or gold.

[24] "The altars you make for me must be simple altars of earth. Offer on such altars your sacrifices to me—your burnt offerings and peace offerings, your sheep and goats and your cattle. Build altars in the places where I remind you who I am, and I will come and bless you there. [25] If you build altars from stone, use only uncut stones. Do not chip or shape the stones with a tool, for that would make them unfit for holy use. [26] And you may not approach my altar by steps. If you do, someone might look up under the skirts of your clothing and see your nakedness.

[21:1] "Here are some other instructions you must present to Israel:

[2] "If you buy a Hebrew slave, he is to serve for only six years. Set him free in the seventh year, and he will owe you nothing for his freedom. [3] If he was single when he became your slave and then married afterward, only he will go free in the seventh year. But if he was married before he became a slave, then his wife will be freed with him.

[4] "If his master gave him a wife while he was a slave, and they had sons or daughters, then the man will be free in the seventh year, but his wife and children will still belong to his master.

[5] But the slave may plainly declare, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children. I would rather not go free.' [6] If he does this, his master must present him before God. Then his master must take him to the door and publicly pierce his ear with an awl. After that, the slave will belong to his master forever.

[7] "When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she will not be freed at the end of six years as the men are. [8] If she does not please the man who bought her, he may allow her to be bought back again. But he is not allowed to sell her to foreigners, since he is the one who broke the contract with her. [9] And if the slave girl's owner arranges for her to marry his son, he may no longer treat her as a slave girl, but he must treat her as his daughter.

[10] If he himself marries her and then takes another wife, he may not reduce her food or clothing or fail to sleep with her as his wife. [11] If he fails in any of these three ways, she may leave as a free woman without making any payment.

[12] "Anyone who hits a person hard enough to cause death must be put to death. [13] But if it is an accident and God allows it to happen, I will appoint a place where the slayer can run for safety. [14] However, if someone deliberately attacks and kills another person, then the slayer must be dragged even from my altar and put to death.

[15] "Anyone who strikes father or mother must be put to death.

[16] "Kidnappers must be killed, whether they are caught in possession of their victims or have already sold them as slaves.

[17] "Anyone who curses father or mother must be put to death.

[18] "Now suppose two people quarrel, and one hits the other with a stone or fist, causing injury but not death. [19] If the injured person is later able to walk again, even with a crutch, the assailant will be innocent. Nonetheless, the assailant must pay for time lost because of the injury and must pay for the medical expenses.

[20] "If a male or female slave is beaten and dies, the owner must be punished. [21] If the slave recovers after a couple of days, however, then the owner should not be punished, since the slave is the owner's property.

[22] "Now suppose two people are fighting, and in the process, they hurt a pregnant woman so her child is born prematurely. If no further harm results, then the person responsible must pay damages in the amount the woman's husband demands and the judges approve. [23] But if any harm results, then the offender must be punished according to the injury. If the result is death, the offender must be executed.

[24] If an eye is injured, injure the eye of the person who did it. If a tooth gets knocked out, knock out the tooth of the person who did it. Similarly, the payment must be hand for hand, foot for foot, [25] burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.

[26] "If an owner hits a male or female slave in the eye and the eye is blinded, then the slave may go free because of the eye. [27] And if an owner knocks out the tooth of a male or female slave, the slave should be released in payment for the tooth.

[28] "If a bull gores a man or woman to death, the bull must be stoned, and its flesh may not be eaten. In such a case, however, the owner will not be held liable. [29] Suppose, on the other hand, that the owner knew the bull had gored people in the past, yet the bull was not kept under control. If this is true and if the bull kills someone, it must be stoned, and the owner must also be killed. [30] However, the dead person's relatives may accept payment from the owner of the bull to compensate for the loss of life. The owner will have to pay whatever is demanded.

[31] "The same principle applies if the bull gores a boy or a girl. [32] But if the bull gores a slave, either male or female, the slave's owner is to be given thirty silver coins in payment, and the bull must be stoned.

[33] "Suppose someone digs or uncovers a well and fails to cover it, and then an ox or a donkey falls into it. [34] The owner of the well must pay in full for the dead animal but then gets to keep it.

[35] "If someone's bull injures a neighbor's bull and the injured bull dies, then the two owners must sell the live bull and divide the money between them. Each will also own half of the dead bull. [36] But if the bull was known from past experience to gore, yet its owner failed to keep it under control, the money will not be divided. The owner of the living bull must pay in full for the dead bull but then gets to keep it.

[22:1] "A fine must be paid by anyone who steals an ox or sheep and then kills or sells it. For oxen the fine is five oxen for each one stolen. For sheep the fine is four sheep for each one stolen.

[2] "If a thief is caught in the act of breaking into a house and is killed in the process, the person who killed the thief is not guilty. [3] But if it happens in daylight, the one who killed the thief is guilty of murder.

"A thief who is caught must pay in full for everything that was stolen. If payment is not made, the thief must be sold as a slave to pay the debt. [4] If someone steals an ox or a donkey or a sheep and it is recovered alive, then the thief must pay double the value.

[5] "If an animal is grazing in a field or vineyard and the owner lets it stray into someone else's field to graze, then the animal's owner must pay damages in the form of high-quality grain or grapes.

[6] "If a fire gets out of control and goes into another person's field, destroying the sheaves or the standing grain, then the one who started the fire must pay for the lost crops.

[7] "Suppose someone entrusts money or goods to a neighbor, and they are stolen from the neighbor's house. If the thief is found, the fine is double the value of what was stolen. [8] But if the thief is not found, God will determine whether or not it was the neighbor who stole the property.

[9] "Suppose there is a dispute between two people as to who owns a particular ox, donkey, sheep, article of clothing, or anything else. Both parties must come before God for a decision, and the person whom God declares guilty must pay double to the other.

[10] "Now suppose someone asks a neighbor to care for a donkey, ox, sheep, or any other animal, but it dies or is injured or gets away, and there is no eyewitness to report just what happened. [11] The neighbor must then take an oath of innocence in the presence of the Lord. The owner must accept the neighbor's word, and no payment will be required.

[12] But if the animal or property was stolen, payment must be made to the owner. [13] If it was attacked by a wild animal, the carcass must be shown as evidence, and no payment will be required.

[14] "If someone borrows an animal from a neighbor and it is injured or killed, and if the owner was not there at the time, the person who borrowed it must pay for it. [15] But if the owner is there, no payment is required. And no payment is required if the animal was rented because this loss was covered by the rental fee.

[16] "If a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged to anyone and sleeps with her, he must pay the customary dowry and accept her as his wife. [17] But if her father refuses to let her marry him, the man must still pay the money for her dowry.

[18] "A sorceress must not be allowed to live.

[19] "Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be executed.

[20] "Anyone who sacrifices to any god other than the Lord must be destroyed.

[21] "Do not oppress foreigners in any way. Remember, you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt.

[22] "Do not exploit widows or orphans. [23] If you do and they cry out to me, then I will surely help them. [24] My anger will blaze forth against you, and I will kill you with the sword. Your wives will become widows, and your children will become fatherless.

[25] "If you lend money to a fellow Hebrew in need, do not be like a money lender, charging interest. [26] If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge of repayment, you must return it by nightfall. [27] Your neighbor will need it to stay warm during the night. If you do not return it and your neighbor cries out to me for help, then I will hear, for I am very merciful.

[28] "Do not blaspheme God or curse anyone who rules over you.

[29] "Do not hold anything back when you give me the tithe of your crops and your wine.

"You must make the necessary payment for redemption of your firstborn sons.

[30] "You must also give me the firstborn of your cattle and sheep. Leave the newborn animal with its mother for seven days; then give it to me on the eighth day.

[31] "You are my own holy people. Therefore, do not eat any animal that has been attacked and killed by a wild animal. Throw its carcass out for the dogs to eat.

[23:1] "Do not pass along false reports. Do not cooperate with evil people by telling lies on the witness stand.

[2] "Do not join a crowd that intends to do evil. When you are on the witness stand, do not be swayed in your testimony by the opinion of the majority. [3] And do not slant your testimony in favor of a person just because that person is poor.

[4] "If you come upon your enemy's ox or donkey that has strayed away, take it back to its owner. [5] If you see the donkey of someone who hates you struggling beneath a heavy load, do not walk by. Instead, stop and offer to help.

[6] "Do not twist justice against people simply because they are poor.

[7] "Keep far away from falsely charging anyone with evil. Never put an innocent or honest person to death. I will not allow anyone guilty of this to go free.

[8] "Take no bribes, for a bribe makes you ignore something that you clearly see. A bribe always hurts the cause of the person who is in the right.

[9] "Do not oppress the foreigners living among you. You know what it is like to be a foreigner. Remember your own experience in the land of Egypt.

[10] "Plant and harvest your crops for six years, [11] but let the land rest and lie fallow during the seventh year. Then let the poor among you harvest any volunteer crop that may come up. Leave the rest for the animals to eat. The same applies to your vineyards and olive groves.

[12] "Work for six days, and rest on the seventh. This will give your ox and your donkey a chance to rest. It will also allow the people of your household, including your slaves and visitors, to be refreshed.

[13] "Be sure to obey all my instructions. And remember, never pray to or swear by any other gods. Do not even mention their names.

[14] "Each year you must celebrate three festivals in my honor. [15] The first is the Festival of Unleavened Bread. For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast, just as I commanded you before. This festival will be an annual event at the appointed time in early spring, for that is the anniversary of your exodus from Egypt. Everyone must bring me a sacrifice at that time. [16] You must also celebrate the Festival of Harvest, when you bring me the first crops of your harvest. Finally, you are to celebrate the Festival of the Final Harvest at the end of the harvest season. [17] At these three times each year, every man in Israel must appear before the Sovereign Lord.

[18] "Sacrificial blood must never be offered together with bread that has yeast in it. And no sacrificial fat may be left unoffered until the next morning.

[19] "As you harvest each of your crops, bring me a choice sample of the first day's harvest. It must be offered to the Lord your God.

"You must not cook a young goat in its mother's milk.

[20] "See, I am sending my angel before you to lead you safely to the land I have prepared for you. [21] Pay attention to him, and obey all of his instructions. Do not rebel against him, for he will not forgive your sins. He is my representative—he bears my name. [22] But if you are careful to obey him, following all my instructions, then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and I will oppose those who oppose you. [23] For my angel will go before you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites, so you may live there. And I will destroy them. [24] Do not worship the gods of these other nations or serve them in any way, and never follow their evil example. Instead, you must utterly conquer them and break down their shameful idols.

[25] "You must serve only the Lord your God. If you do, I will bless you with food and water, and I will keep you healthy. [26] There will be no miscarriages or infertility among your people, and I will give you long, full lives.

[27] "I will send my terror upon all the people whose lands you invade, and they will panic before you. [28] I will send hornets ahead of you to drive out the Hivites, Canaanites, and Hittites. [29] But I will not do this all in one year because the land would become a wilderness, and the wild animals would become too many to control. [30] I will drive them out a little at a time until your population has increased enough to fill the land. [31] And I will fix your boundaries from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, and from the southern deserts to the Euphrates River. I will help you defeat the people now living in the land, and you will drive them out ahead of you.

[32] "Make no treaties with them and have nothing to do with their gods. [33] Do not even let them live among you! If you do, they will infect you with their sin of idol worship, and that would be disastrous for you."

[24:1] Then the Lord instructed Moses: "Come up here to me, and bring along Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of Israel's leaders. All of them must worship at a distance. [2] You alone, Moses, are allowed to come near to the Lord. The others must not come too close. And remember, none of the other people are allowed to climb on the mountain at all."

[3] When Moses had announced to the people all the teachings and regulations the Lord had given him, they answered in unison, "We will do everything the Lord has told us to do."

[4] Then Moses carefully wrote down all the Lord's instructions. Early the next morning he built an altar at the foot of the mountain. He also set up twelve pillars around the altar, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel.

[5] Then he sent some of the young men to sacrifice young bulls as burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord. [6] Moses took half the blood from these animals and drew it off into basins. The other half he splashed against the altar.

[7] Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They all responded again, "We will do everything the Lord has commanded. We will obey."

[8] Then Moses sprinkled the blood from the basins over the people and said, "This blood confirms the covenant the Lord has made with you in giving you these laws."

[9] Then Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the leaders of Israel went up the mountain. [10] There they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there seemed to be a pavement of brilliant sapphire, as clear as the heavens. [11] And though Israel's leaders saw God, he did not destroy them. In fact, they shared a meal together in God's presence!

[12] And the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain. Stay there while I give you the tablets of stone that I have inscribed with my instructions and commands. Then you will teach the people from them." [13] So Moses and his assistant Joshua climbed up the mountain of God.

[14] Moses told the other leaders, "Stay here and wait for us until we come back. If there are any problems while I am gone, consult with Aaron and Hur, who are here with you."

[15] Then Moses went up the mountain, and the cloud covered it. [16] And the glorious presence of the Lord rested upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day the Lord called to Moses from the cloud. [17] The Israelites at the foot of the mountain saw an awesome sight. The awesome glory of the Lord on the mountaintop looked like a devouring fire. [18] Then Moses disappeared into the cloud as he climbed higher up the mountain. He stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

[25:1] The Lord said to Moses, [2] "Tell the people of Israel that everyone who wants to may bring me an offering. [3] Here is a list of items you may accept on my behalf: gold, silver, and bronze; [4] blue, purple, and scarlet yarn; fine linen; goat hair for cloth; [5] tanned ram skins and fine goatskin leather; acacia wood; [6] olive oil for the lamps; spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; [7] onyx stones, and other stones to be set in the ephod and the chestpiece.

[8] "I want the people of Israel to build me a sacred residence where I can live among them.

[9] You must make this Tabernacle and its furnishings exactly according to the plans I will show you.

[10] "Make an Ark of acacia wood—a sacred chest 3 3/4 feet long, 2 1/4 feet wide, and 2 1/4 feet high. [11] Overlay it inside and outside with pure gold, and put a molding of gold all around it. [12] Cast four rings of gold for it, and attach them to its four feet, two rings on each side. [13] Make poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. [14] Fit the poles into the rings at the sides of the Ark to carry it.

[15] These carrying poles must never be taken from the rings; they are to be left there permanently. [16] When the Ark is finished, place inside it the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you.

[17] "Then make the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—out of pure gold. It must be 3 3/4 feet long and 2 1/4 feet wide. [18] Then use hammered gold to make two cherubim, and place them at the two ends of the atonement cover. [19] Attach the cherubim to each end of the atonement cover, making it all one piece. [20] The cherubim will face each other, looking down on the atonement cover with their wings spread out above it. [21] Place inside the Ark the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you. Then put the atonement cover on top of the Ark. [22] I will meet with you there and talk to you from above the atonement cover between the gold cherubim that hover over the Ark of the Covenant. From there I will give you my commands for the people of Israel.

[23] "Then make a table of acacia wood, 3 feet long, 1 1/2 feet wide, and 2 1/4 feet high. [24] Overlay it with pure gold and run a molding of gold around it. [25] Put a rim about three inches wide around the top edge, and put a gold molding all around the rim. [26] Make four gold rings, and put the rings at the four corners by the four legs, [27] close to the rim around the top. These rings will support the poles used to carry the table. [28] Make these poles from acacia wood and overlay them with gold. [29] And make gold plates and dishes, as well as pitchers and bowls to be used in pouring out drink offerings. [30] You must always keep the special Bread of the Presence on the table before me.

[31] "Make a lampstand of pure, hammered gold. The entire lampstand and its decorations will be one piece—the base, center stem, lamp cups, buds, and blossoms. [32] It will have six branches, three branches going out from each side of the center stem. [33] Each of the six branches will hold a cup shaped like an almond blossom, complete with buds and petals. [34] The center stem of the lampstand will be decorated with four almond blossoms, complete with buds and petals. [35] One blossom will be set beneath each pair of branches where they extend from the center stem. [36] The decorations and branches must all be one piece with the stem, and they must be hammered from pure gold. [37] Then make the seven lamps for the lampstand, and set them so they reflect their light forward. [38] The lamp snuffers and trays must also be made of pure gold. [39] You will need seventy-five pounds of pure gold for the lampstand and its accessories.

[40] "Be sure that you make everything according to the pattern I have shown you here on the mountain.

[26:1] "Make the Tabernacle from ten sheets of fine linen. These sheets are to be decorated with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, with figures of cherubim skillfully embroidered into them. [2] Each sheet must be forty-two feet long and six feet wide. All ten sheets must be exactly the same size. [3] Join five of these sheets together into one set; then join the other five sheets into a second set. [4] Put loops of blue yarn along the edge of the last sheet in each set. [5] The fifty loops along the edge of one set are to match the fifty loops along the edge of the other. [6] Then make fifty gold clasps to fasten the loops of the two sets of sheets together, making the Tabernacle a single unit.

[7] "Make heavy sheets of cloth from goat hair to cover the Tabernacle. There must be eleven of these sheets, [8] each forty-five feet long and six feet wide. All eleven of these sheets must be exactly the same size. [9] Join five of these together into one set, and join the other six into a second set. The sixth sheet of the second set is to be doubled over at the entrance of the sacred tent. [10] Put fifty loops along the edge of the last sheet in each set, [11] and fasten them together with fifty bronze clasps. In this way, the two sets will become a single unit. [12] An extra half sheet of this roof covering will be left to hang over the back of the Tabernacle, [13] and the covering will hang down an extra eighteen inches on each side. [14] On top of these coverings place a layer of tanned ram skins, and over them put a layer of fine goatskin leather. This will complete the roof covering.

[15] "The framework of the Tabernacle will consist of frames made of acacia wood. [16] Each frame must be 15 feet high and 2 1/4 feet wide. [17] There will be two pegs on each frame so they can be joined to the next frame. All the frames must be made this way. [18] Twenty of these frames will support the south side of the Tabernacle. [19] They will fit into forty silver bases—two bases under each frame. [20] On the north side there will also be twenty of these frames, [21] with their forty silver bases, two bases for each frame. [22] On the west side there will be six frames, [23] along with an extra frame at each corner.

[24] These corner frames will be connected at the bottom and firmly attached at the top with a single ring, forming a single unit. Both of these corner frames will be made the same way. [25] So there will be eight frames on that end of the Tabernacle, supported by sixteen silver bases—two bases under each frame.

[26] "Make crossbars of acacia wood to run across the frames, five crossbars for the north side of the Tabernacle [27] and five for the south side. Also make five crossbars for the rear of the Tabernacle, which will face westward. [28] The middle crossbar, halfway up the frames, will run all the way from one end of the Tabernacle to the other. [29] Overlay the frames with gold and make gold rings to support the crossbars. Overlay the crossbars with gold as well.

[30] "Set up this Tabernacle according to the design you were shown on the mountain.

[31] "Across the inside of the Tabernacle hang a special curtain made of fine linen, with cherubim skillfully embroidered into the cloth using blue, purple, and scarlet yarn.

[32] Hang this inner curtain on gold hooks set into four posts made from acacia wood and overlaid with gold. The posts will fit into silver bases. [33] When the inner curtain is in place, put the Ark of the Covenant behind it. This curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.

[34] "Then put the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—on top of the Ark of the Covenant inside the Most Holy Place. [35] Place the table and lampstand across the room from each other outside the inner curtain. The lampstand must be placed on the south side, and the table must be set toward the north.

[36] "Make another curtain from fine linen for the entrance of the sacred tent, and embroider exquisite designs into it, using blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [37] Hang this curtain on gold hooks set into five posts made from acacia wood and overlaid with gold. The posts will fit into five bronze bases.

[27:1] "Using acacia wood, make a square altar 7 1/2 feet wide, 7 1/2 feet long, and 4 1/2 feet high. [2] Make a horn at each of the four corners of the altar so the horns and altar are all one piece. Overlay the altar and its horns with bronze. [3] The ash buckets, shovels, basins, meat hooks, and firepans will all be made of bronze. [4] Make a bronze grating, with a metal ring at each corner. [5] Fit the grating halfway down into the firebox, resting it on the ledge built there. [6] For moving the altar, make poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. [7] To carry it, put the poles into the rings at two sides of the altar. [8] The altar must be hollow, made from planks. Be careful to build it just as you were shown on the mountain.

[9] "Then make a courtyard for the Tabernacle, enclosed with curtains made from fine linen. On the south side the curtains will stretch for 150 feet. [10] They will be held up by twenty bronze posts that fit into twenty bronze bases. The curtains will be held up with silver hooks attached to the silver rods that are attached to the posts. [11] It will be the same on the north side of the courtyard—150 feet of curtains held up by twenty posts fitted into bronze bases, with silver hooks and rods. [12] The curtains on the west end of the courtyard will be 75 feet long, supported by ten posts set into ten bases. [13] The east end will also be 75 feet long. [14] The courtyard entrance will be on the east end, flanked by two curtains. The curtain on the right side will be 22 1/2 feet long, supported by three posts set into three bases. [15] The curtain on the left side will also be 22 1/2 feet long, supported by three posts set into three bases.

[16] "For the entrance to the courtyard, make a curtain that is 30 feet long. Fashion it from fine linen, and decorate it with beautiful embroidery in blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. It will be attached to four posts that fit into four bases. [17] All the posts around the courtyard must be connected by silver rods, using silver hooks. The posts are to be set in solid bronze bases. [18] So the entire courtyard will be 150 feet long and 75 feet wide, with curtain walls 7 1/2 feet high, made from fine linen. The bases supporting its walls will be made of bronze.

[19] "All the articles used in the work of the Tabernacle, including all the tent pegs used to support the Tabernacle and the courtyard curtains, must be made of bronze.

[20] "Tell the people of Israel to bring you pure olive oil for the lampstand, so it can be kept burning continually. [21] The lampstand will be placed outside the inner curtain of the Most Holy Place in the Tabernacle. Aaron and his sons will keep the lamps burning in the Lord's presence day and night. This is a permanent law for the people of Israel, and it must be kept by all future generations.

[28:1] "Your brother, Aaron, and his sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, will be set apart from the common people. They will be my priests and will minister to me. [2] Make special clothing for Aaron to show his separation to God—beautiful garments that will lend dignity to his work. [3] Instruct all those who have special skills as tailors to make the garments that will set Aaron apart from everyone else, so he may serve me as a priest. [4] They are to make a chestpiece, an ephod, a robe, an embroidered tunic, a turban, and a sash. They will also make special garments for Aaron's sons to wear when they serve as priests before me. [5] These items must be made of fine linen cloth and embroidered with gold thread and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn.

[6] "The ephod must be made of fine linen cloth and skillfully embroidered with gold thread and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [7] It will consist of two pieces, front and back, joined at the shoulders with two shoulder-pieces. [8] And the sash will be made of the same materials: fine linen cloth embroidered with gold thread and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [9] Take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the tribes of Israel. [10] Six names will be on each stone, naming all the tribes in the order of their ancestors' births. [11] Engrave these names in the same way a gem cutter engraves a seal. Mount the stones in gold settings. [12] Fasten the two stones on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod as memorial stones for the people of Israel. Aaron will carry these names before the Lord as a constant reminder. [13] The settings are to be made of gold filigree, [14] and two cords made of pure gold will be attached to the settings on the shoulders of the ephod.

[15] "Then, with the most careful workmanship, make a chestpiece that will be used to determine God's will. Use the same materials as you did for the ephod: fine linen cloth embroidered with gold thread and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [16] This chestpiece will be made of two folds of cloth, forming a pouch nine inches square. [17] Four rows of gemstones will be attached to it. The first row will contain a red carnelian, a chrysolite, and an emerald.

[18] The second row will contain a turquoise, a sapphire, and a white moonstone. [19] The third row will contain a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. [20] The fourth row will contain a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. All these stones will be set in gold. [21] Each stone will represent one of the tribes of Israel, and the name of that tribe will be engraved on it as though it were a seal.

[22] "To attach the chestpiece to the ephod, make braided cords of pure gold. [23] Then make two gold rings and attach them to the top corners of the chestpiece. [24] The two gold cords will go through the rings on the chestpiece,

[25] And the ends of the cords will be tied to the gold settings on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod. [26] Then make two more gold rings, and attach them to the two lower inside corners of the chestpiece next to the ephod. [27] And make two more gold rings and attach them to the ephod near the sash. [28] Then attach the bottom rings of the chestpiece to the rings on the ephod with blue cords. This will hold the chestpiece securely to the ephod above the beautiful sash. [29] In this way, Aaron will carry the names of the tribes of Israel on the chestpiece over his heart when he goes into the presence of the Lord in the Holy Place. Thus, the Lord will be reminded of his people continually. [30] Insert into the pocket of the chestpiece the Urim and Thummim, to be carried over Aaron's heart when he goes into the Lord's presence. Thus, Aaron will always carry the objects used to determine the Lord's will for his people whenever he goes in before the Lord.

[31] "Make the robe of the ephod entirely of blue cloth, [32] with an opening for Aaron's head in the middle of it. The opening will be reinforced by a woven collar so it will not tear. [33] Make pomegranates out of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, and attach them to the hem of the robe, with gold bells between them. [34] The gold bells and pomegranates are to alternate all the way around the hem. [35] Aaron will wear this robe whenever he enters the Holy Place to minister to the Lord, and the bells will tinkle as he goes in and out of the Lord's presence. If he wears it, he will not die.

[36] "Next make a medallion of pure gold. Using the techniques of an engraver, inscribe it with these words: Set Apart as Holy to the Lord. [37] This medallion will be attached to the front of Aaron's turban by means of a blue cord. [38] Aaron will wear it on his forehead, thus bearing the guilt connected with any errors regarding the sacred offerings of the people of Israel. He must always wear it so the Lord will accept the people.

[39] "Weave Aaron's patterned tunic from fine linen cloth. Fashion the turban out of this linen as well. Also make him an embroidered sash.

[40] "Then for Aaron's sons, make tunics, sashes, and headdresses to give them dignity and respect. [41] Clothe Aaron and his sons with these garments, and then anoint and ordain them. Set them apart as holy so they can serve as my priests. [42] Also make linen underclothes for them, to be worn next to their bodies, reaching from waist to thigh. [43] These must be worn whenever Aaron and his sons enter the Tabernacle or approach the altar in the Holy Place to perform their duties. Thus they will not incur guilt and die. This law is permanent for Aaron and his descendants.

[29:1] "This is the ceremony for the dedication of Aaron and his sons as priests: Take a young bull and two rams with no physical defects. [2] Then using fine wheat flour and no yeast, make loaves of bread, thin cakes mixed with olive oil, and wafers with oil poured over them. [3] Place these various kinds of bread in a single basket, and present them at the entrance of the Tabernacle, along with the young bull and the two rams.

[4] "Present Aaron and his sons at the entrance of the Tabernacle, and wash them with water. [5] Then put Aaron's tunic on him, along with the embroidered robe of the ephod, the ephod itself, the chestpiece, and the sash. [6] And place on his head the turban with the gold medallion. [7] Then take the anointing oil and pour it over his head. [8] Next present his sons, and dress them in their tunics [9] with their woven sashes and their headdresses. They will then be priests forever. In this way, you will ordain Aaron and his sons.

[10] "Then bring the young bull to the entrance of the Tabernacle, and Aaron and his sons will lay their hands on its head. [11] You will then slaughter it in the Lord's presence at the entrance of the Tabernacle. [12] Smear some of its blood on the horns of the altar with your finger, and pour out the rest at the base of the altar. [13] Take all the fat that covers the internal organs, also the long lobe of the liver and the two kidneys with their fat, and burn them on the altar. [14] Then take the carcass (including the skin and the dung) outside the camp, and burn it as a sin offering.

[15] "Next Aaron and his sons must lay their hands on the head of one of the rams [16] as it is slaughtered. Its blood will be collected and sprinkled on the sides of the altar. [17] Cut up the ram and wash off the internal organs and the legs. Set them alongside the head and the other pieces of the body, [18] and burn them all on the altar. This is a burnt offering to the Lord, which is very pleasing to him.

[19] "Now take the other ram and have Aaron and his sons lay their hands on its head [20] as it is slaughtered. Collect the blood and place some of it on the tip of the right earlobes of Aaron and his sons. Also put it on their right thumbs and the big toes of their right feet. Sprinkle the rest of the blood on the sides of the altar. [21] Then take some of the blood from the altar and mix it with some of the anointing oil. Sprinkle it on Aaron and his sons and on their clothes. In this way, they and their clothing will be set apart as holy to the Lord.

[22] "Since this is the ram for the ordination of Aaron and his sons, take the fat of the ram, including the fat tail and the fat that covers the internal organs. Also, take the long lobe of the liver, the two kidneys with their fat, and the right thigh. [23] Then take one loaf of bread, one cake mixed with olive oil, and one wafer from the basket of yeastless bread that was placed before the Lord. [24] Put all these in the hands of Aaron and his sons to be lifted up as a special gift to the Lord. [25] Afterward take the bread from their hands, and burn it on the altar as a burnt offering that will be pleasing to the Lord.

[26] Then take the breast of Aaron's ordination ram, and lift it up in the Lord's presence as a special gift to him. Afterward keep it for yourself.

[27] "Set aside as holy the parts of the ordination ram that belong to Aaron and his sons. This includes the breast and the thigh that were lifted up before the Lord in the ordination ceremony. [28] In the future, whenever the people of Israel offer up peace offerings or thanksgiving offerings to the Lord, these parts will be the regular share of Aaron and his descendants.

[29] "Aaron's sacred garments must be preserved for his descendants who will succeed him, so they can be anointed and ordained in them. [30] Whoever is the next high priest after Aaron will wear these clothes for seven days before beginning to minister in the Tabernacle and the Holy Place.

[31] "Take the ram used in the ordination ceremony, and boil its meat in a sacred place. [32] Aaron and his sons are to eat this meat, along with the bread in the basket, at the Tabernacle entrance. [33] They alone may eat the meat and bread used for their atonement in the ordination ceremony. The ordinary people may not eat them, for these things are set apart and holy. [34] If any of the ordination meat or bread remains until the morning, it must be burned. It may not be eaten, for it is holy.

[35] "This is how you will ordain Aaron and his sons to their offices. The ordination ceremony will go on for seven days. [36] Each day you must sacrifice a young bull as an offering for the atonement of sin. Afterward make an offering to cleanse the altar. Purify the altar by making atonement for it; make it holy by anointing it with oil. [37] Make atonement for the altar every day for seven days. After that, the altar will be exceedingly holy, and whatever touches it will become holy.

[38] "This is what you are to offer on the altar. Offer two one-year-old lambs each day, [39] one in the morning and the other in the evening. [40] With one of them, offer two quarts of fine flour mixed with one quart of olive oil; also, offer one quart of wine as a drink offering. [41] Offer the other lamb in the evening, along with the same offerings of flour and wine as in the morning. It will be a fragrant offering to the Lord, an offering made by fire.

[42] "This is to be a daily burnt offering given from generation to generation. Offer it in the Lord's presence at the Tabernacle entrance, where I will meet you and speak with you. [43] I will meet the people of Israel there, and the Tabernacle will be sanctified by my glorious presence. [44] Yes, I will make the Tabernacle and the altar most holy, and I will set apart Aaron and his sons as holy, that they may be my priests. [45] I will live among the people of Israel and be their God, [46] and they will know that I am the Lord their God. I am the one who brought them out of Egypt so that I could live among them. I am the Lord their God.

[30:1] "Then make a small altar out of acacia wood for burning incense. [2] It must be eighteen inches square and three feet high, with horns at the corners carved from the same piece of wood as the altar. [3] Overlay the top, sides, and horns of the altar with pure gold, and run a gold molding around the entire altar. [4] Beneath the molding, on opposite sides of the altar, attach two gold rings to support the carrying poles. [5] The poles are to be made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. [6] Place the incense altar just outside the inner curtain, opposite the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—that rests on the Ark of the Covenant. I will meet with you there.

[7] "Every morning when Aaron trims the lamps, he must burn fragrant incense on the altar. [8] And each evening when he tends to the lamps, he must again burn incense in the Lord's presence. This must be done from generation to generation. [9] Do not offer any unholy incense on this altar, or any burnt offerings, grain offerings, or drink offerings.

[10] "Once a year Aaron must purify the altar by placing on its horns the blood from the offering made for the atonement of sin. This will be a regular, annual event from generation to generation, for this is the Lord's supremely holy altar."

[11] And the Lord said to Moses, [12] "Whenever you take a census of the people of Israel, each man who is counted must pay a ransom for himself to the Lord. Then there will be no plagues among the people as you count them. [13] His payment to the Lord will be one-fifth of an ounce of silver. [14] All who have reached their twentieth birthday must give this offering to the Lord. [15] When this offering is given to the Lord to make atonement for yourselves, the rich must not give more, and the poor must not give less. [16] Use this money for the care of the Tabernacle. It will bring you, the Israelites, to the Lord's attention, and it will make atonement for your lives."

[17] And the Lord said to Moses, [18] "Make a large bronze washbasin with a bronze pedestal. Put it between the Tabernacle and the altar, and fill it with water. [19] Aaron and his sons will wash their hands and feet there [20] before they go into the Tabernacle to appear before the Lord and before they approach the altar to burn offerings to the Lord. They must always wash before ministering in these ways, or they will die. [21] This is a permanent law for Aaron and his descendants, to be kept from generation to generation."

[22] Then the Lord said to Moses, [23] "Collect choice spices—12 1/2 pounds of pure myrrh, 6 1/4 pounds each of cinnamon and of sweet cane, [24] 12 1/2 pounds of cassia, and one gallon of olive oil. [25] Blend these ingredients into a holy anointing oil. [26] Use this scented oil to anoint the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, [27] the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and all its accessories, the incense altar, [28] the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the large washbasin with its pedestal. [29] Sanctify them to make them entirely holy. After this, whatever touches them will become holy.

[30] Use this oil also to anoint Aaron and his sons, sanctifying them so they can minister before me as priests. [31] And say to the people of Israel, "This will always be my holy anointing oil. [32] It must never be poured on the body of an ordinary person, and you must never make any of it for yourselves. It is holy, and you must treat it as holy. [33] Anyone who blends scented oil like it or puts any of it on someone who is not a priest will be cut off from the community.' "

[34] These were the Lord's instructions to Moses concerning the incense: "Gather sweet spices—resin droplets, mollusk scent, galbanum, and pure frankincense—weighing out the same amounts of each. [35] Using the usual techniques of the incense maker, refine it to produce a pure and holy incense. [36] Beat some of it very fine and put some of it in front of the Ark of the Covenant, where I will meet with you in the Tabernacle. This incense is most holy. [37] Never make this incense for yourselves. It is reserved for the Lord, and you must treat it as holy. [38] Those who make it for their own enjoyment will be cut off from the community."

[31:1] The Lord also said to Moses, [2] "Look, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. [3] I have filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, intelligence, and skill in all kinds of crafts.

[4] He is able to create beautiful objects from gold, silver, and bronze. [5] He is skilled in cutting and setting gemstones and in carving wood. Yes, he is a master at every craft!

[6] "And I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, to be his assistant. Moreover, I have given special skill to all the naturally talented craftsmen so they can make all the things I have instructed you to make:

[7] the Tabernacle itself; the Ark of the Covenant; the Ark's cover—the place of atonement; all the furnishings of the Tabernacle; [8] the table and all its utensils; the gold lampstand with all its accessories; the incense altar; [9] the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils; the washbasin and its pedestal; [10] the beautifully stitched, holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments for his sons to wear as they minister as priests; [11] the anointing oil; and the special incense for the Holy Place. They must follow exactly all the instructions I have given you."

[12] The Lord then gave these further instructions to Moses: [13] "Tell the people of Israel to keep my Sabbath day, for the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant between me and you forever. It helps you to remember that I am the Lord, who makes you holy. [14] Yes, keep the Sabbath day, for it is holy. Anyone who desecrates it must die; anyone who works on that day will be cut off from the community. [15] Work six days only, but the seventh day must be a day of total rest. I repeat: Because the Lord considers it a holy day, anyone who works on the Sabbath must be put to death. [16] The people of Israel must keep the Sabbath day forever. [17] It is a permanent sign of my covenant with them. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, but he rested on the seventh day and was refreshed."

[18] Then as the Lord finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, written by the finger of God.

[32:1] When Moses failed to come back down the mountain right away, the people went to Aaron. "Look," they said, "make us some gods who can lead us. This man Moses, who brought us here from Egypt, has disappeared. We don't know what has happened to him."

[2] So Aaron said, "Tell your wives and sons and daughters to take off their gold earrings, and then bring them to me."

[3] All the people obeyed Aaron and brought him their gold earrings. [4] Then Aaron took the gold, melted it down, and molded and tooled it into the shape of a calf. The people exclaimed, "O Israel, these are the gods who brought you out of Egypt!"

[5] When Aaron saw how excited the people were about it, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord!"

[6] So the people got up early the next morning to sacrifice burnt offerings and peace offerings. After this, they celebrated with feasting and drinking, and indulged themselves in pagan revelry.

[7] Then the Lord told Moses, "Quick! Go down the mountain! The people you brought from Egypt have defiled themselves. [8] They have already turned from the way I commanded them to live. They have made an idol shaped like a calf, and they have worshiped and sacrificed to it. They are saying, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you out of Egypt.' "

[9] Then the Lord said, "I have seen how stubborn and rebellious these people are. [10] Now leave me alone so my anger can blaze against them and destroy them all. Then I will make you, Moses, into a great nation instead of them."

[11] But Moses pleaded with the Lord his God not to do it. "O Lord!" he exclaimed. "Why are you so angry with your own people whom you brought from the land of Egypt with such great power and mighty acts? [12] The Egyptians will say, 'God tricked them into coming to the mountains so he could kill them and wipe them from the face of the earth.' Turn away from your fierce anger. Change your mind about this terrible disaster you are planning against your people! [13] Remember your covenant with your servants—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You swore by your own self, 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven. Yes, I will give them all of this land that I have promised to your descendants, and they will possess it forever.' "

[14] So the Lord withdrew his threat and didn't bring against his people the disaster he had threatened.

[15] Then Moses turned and went down the mountain. He held in his hands the two stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back. [16] These stone tablets were God's work; the words on them were written by God himself.

[17] When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting below them, he exclaimed to Moses, "It sounds as if there is a war in the camp!"

[18] But Moses replied, "No, it's neither a cry of victory nor a cry of defeat. It is the sound of a celebration."

[19] When they came near the camp, Moses saw the calf and the dancing. In terrible anger, he threw the stone tablets to the ground, smashing them at the foot of the mountain. [20] He took the calf they had made and melted it in the fire. And when the metal had cooled, he ground it into powder and mixed it with water. Then he made the people drink it.

[21] After that, he turned to Aaron. "What did the people do to you?" he demanded. "How did they ever make you bring such terrible sin upon them?"

[22] "Don't get upset, sir," Aaron replied. "You yourself know these people and what a wicked bunch they are. [23] They said to me, 'Make us some gods to lead us, for something has happened to this man Moses, who led us out of Egypt.' [24] So I told them, 'Bring me your gold earrings.' When they brought them to me, I threw them into the fire—and out came this calf!"

[25] When Moses saw that Aaron had let the people get completely out of control—and much to the amusement of their enemies— [26] he stood at the entrance to the camp and shouted, "All of you who are on the Lord's side, come over here and join me." And all the Levites came.

[27] He told them, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Strap on your swords! Go back and forth from one end of the camp to the other, killing even your brothers, friends, and neighbors."

[28] The Levites obeyed Moses, and about three thousand people died that day.

[29] Then Moses told the Levites, "Today you have been ordained for the service of the Lord, for you obeyed him even though it meant killing your own sons and brothers. Because of this, he will now give you a great blessing."

[30] The next day Moses said to the people, "You have committed a terrible sin, but I will return to the Lord on the mountain. Perhaps I will be able to obtain forgiveness for you."

[31] So Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Alas, these people have committed a terrible sin. They have made gods of gold for themselves. [32] But now, please forgive their sin—and if not, then blot me out of the record you are keeping."

[33] The Lord replied to Moses, "I will blot out whoever has sinned against me. [34] Now go, lead the people to the place I told you about. Look! My angel will lead the way before you! But when I call the people to account, I will certainly punish them for their sins."

[35] And the Lord sent a great plague upon the people because they had worshiped the calf Aaron had made.

[33:1] The Lord said to Moses, "Now that you have brought these people out of Egypt, lead them to the land I solemnly promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I told them long ago that I would give this land to their descendants. [2] And I will send an angel before you to drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. [3] Theirs is a land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not travel along with you, for you are a stubborn, unruly people. If I did, I would be tempted to destroy you along the way."

[4] When the people heard these stern words, they went into mourning and refused to wear their jewelry and ornaments. [5] For the Lord had told Moses to tell them, "You are an unruly, stubborn people. If I were there among you for even a moment, I would destroy you. Remove your jewelry and ornaments until I decide what to do with you." [6] So from the time they left Mount Sinai, the Israelites wore no more jewelry.

[7] It was Moses' custom to set up the tent known as the Tent of Meeting far outside the camp. Everyone who wanted to consult with the Lord would go there.

[8] Whenever Moses went out to the Tent of Meeting, all the people would get up and stand in their tent entrances. They would all watch Moses until he disappeared inside. [9] As he went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and hover at the entrance while the Lord spoke with Moses. [10] Then all the people would stand and bow low at their tent entrances. [11] Inside the Tent of Meeting, the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. Afterward Moses would return to the camp, but the young man who assisted him, Joshua son of Nun, stayed behind in the Tent of Meeting.

[12] Moses said to the Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Take these people to the Promised Land.' But you haven't told me whom you will send with me. You call me by name and tell me I have found favor with you. [13] Please, if this is really so, show me your intentions so I will understand you more fully and do exactly what you want me to do. Besides, don't forget that this nation is your very own people."

[14] And the Lord replied, "I will personally go with you, Moses. I will give you rest—everything will be fine for you."

[15] Then Moses said, "If you don't go with us personally, don't let us move a step from this place."

[16] If you don't go with us, how will anyone ever know that your people and I have found favor with you? How else will they know we are special and distinct from all other people on the earth?"

[17] And the Lord replied to Moses, "I will indeed do what you have asked, for you have found favor with me, and you are my friend."

[18] Then Moses had one more request. "Please let me see your glorious presence," he said.

[19] The Lord replied, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will call out my name, 'the Lord,' to you. I will show kindness to anyone I choose, and I will show mercy to anyone I choose. [20] But you may not look directly at my face, for no one may see me and live." [21] The Lord continued, "Stand here on this rock beside me. [22] As my glorious presence passes by, I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed. [23] Then I will remove my hand, and you will see me from behind. But my face will not be seen."

[34:1] The Lord told Moses, "Prepare two stone tablets like the first ones. I will write on them the same words that were on the tablets you smashed. [2] Be ready in the morning to come up Mount Sinai and present yourself to me there on the top of the mountain. [3] No one else may come with you. In fact, no one is allowed anywhere on the mountain. Do not even let the flocks or herds graze near the mountain."

[4] So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first ones. Early in the morning he climbed Mount Sinai as the Lord had told him, carrying the two stone tablets in his hands.

[5] Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and called out his own name, "the Lord," as Moses stood there in his presence. [6] He passed in front of Moses and said, "I am the Lord, I am the Lord, the merciful and gracious God. I am slow to anger and rich in unfailing love and faithfulness. [7] I show this unfailing love to many thousands by forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion. Even so I do not leave sin unpunished, but I punish the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations."

[8] Moses immediately fell to the ground and worshiped. [9] And he said, "If it is true that I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, then please go with us. Yes, this is an unruly and stubborn people, but please pardon our iniquity and our sins. Accept us as your own special possession."

[10] The Lord replied, "All right. This is the covenant I am going to make with you. I will perform wonders that have never been done before anywhere in all the earth or in any nation. And all the people around you will see the power of the Lord—the awesome power I will display through you. [11] Your responsibility is to obey all the commands I am giving you today. Then I will surely drive out all those who stand in your way—the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.

[12] "Be very careful never to make treaties with the people in the land where you are going. If you do, you soon will be following their evil ways. [13] Instead, you must break down their pagan altars, smash the sacred pillars they worship, and cut down their carved images. [14] You must worship no other gods, but only the Lord, for he is a God who is passionate about his relationship with you.

[15] "Do not make treaties of any kind with the people living in the land. They are spiritual prostitutes, committing adultery against me by sacrificing to their gods. If you make peace with them, they will invite you to go with them to worship their gods, and you are likely to do it. [16] And you will accept their daughters, who worship other gods, as wives for your sons. Then they will cause your sons to commit adultery against me by worshipping other gods. [17] You must make no gods for yourselves at all.

[18] "Be sure to celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days, just as I instructed you, at the appointed time each year in early spring, for that was when you left Egypt.

[19] "Every firstborn male belongs to me—of both cattle and sheep. [20] A firstborn male donkey may be redeemed from the Lord by presenting a lamb in its place. But if you decide not to make the exchange, you must kill the donkey by breaking its neck. However, you must redeem every firstborn son. No one is allowed to appear before me without a gift.

[21] "Six days are set aside for work, but on the Sabbath day you must rest, even during the seasons of plowing and harvest. [22] And you must remember to celebrate the Festival of Harvest with the first crop of the wheat harvest, and celebrate the Festival of the Final Harvest at the end of the harvest season. [23] Three times each year all the men of Israel must appear before the Sovereign Lord, the God of Israel.

[24] No one will attack and conquer your land when you go to appear before the Lord your God those three times each year. I will drive out the nations that stand in your way and will enlarge your boundaries.

[25] "You must not offer bread made with yeast as a sacrifice to me. And none of the meat of the Passover lamb may be kept over until the following morning. [26] You must bring the best of the first of each year's crop to the house of the Lord your God.

"You must not cook a young goat in its mother's milk."

[27] And the Lord said to Moses, "Write down all these instructions, for they represent the terms of my covenant with you and with Israel."

[28] Moses was up on the mountain with the Lord forty days and forty nights. In all that time he neither ate nor drank. At that time he wrote the terms of the covenant—the Ten Commandments—on the stone tablets.

[29] When Moses came down the mountain carrying the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, he wasn't aware that his face glowed because he had spoken to the Lord face to face. [30] And when Aaron and the people of Israel saw the radiance of Moses' face, they were afraid to come near him.

[31] But Moses called to them and asked Aaron and the community leaders to come over and talk with him. [32] Then all the people came, and Moses gave them the instructions the Lord had given him on Mount Sinai. [33] When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. [34] But whenever he went into the Tent of Meeting to speak with the Lord, he removed the veil until he came out again. Then he would give the people whatever instructions the Lord had given him, [35] and the people would see his face aglow. Afterward he would put the veil on again until he returned to speak with the Lord.

[35:1] Now Moses called a meeting of all the people and told them, "You must obey these instructions from the Lord. [2] Each week, work for six days only. The seventh day is a day of total rest, a holy day that belongs to the Lord. Anyone who works on that day will die. [3] Do not even light fires in your homes on that day."

[4] Then Moses said to all the people, "This is what the Lord has commanded. [5] Everyone is invited to bring these offerings to the Lord: gold, silver, and bronze; [6] blue, purple, and scarlet yarn; fine linen; goat hair for cloth; [7] tanned ram skins and fine goatskin leather; acacia wood; [8] olive oil for the lamps; spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; [9] onyx stones, and other stones to be set in the ephod and the chestpiece.

[10] "Come, all of you who are gifted craftsmen. Construct everything that the Lord has commanded: [11] the entire Tabernacle, including the sacred tent and its coverings, the clasps, frames, crossbars, posts, and bases; [12] the Ark and its poles; the Ark's cover—the place of atonement; the inner curtain to enclose the Ark in the Most Holy Place; [13] the table, its carrying poles, and all of its utensils; the Bread of the Presence; [14] the lampstand and its accessories; the lamp cups and the oil for lighting;

[15] the incense altar and its carrying poles; the anointing oil and fragrant incense; the curtain for the entrance of the Tabernacle; [16] the altar of burnt offering; the bronze grating of the altar and its carrying poles and utensils; the large washbasin with its pedestal; [17] the curtains for the walls of the courtyard; the posts and their bases; the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard; [18] the tent pegs of the Tabernacle and courtyard and their cords; [19] the beautifully stitched clothing for the priests to wear while ministering in the Holy Place; the sacred garments for Aaron and his sons to wear while officiating as priests."

[20] So all the people left Moses and went to their tents to prepare their gifts. [21] If their hearts were stirred and they desired to do so, they brought to the Lord their offerings of materials for the Tabernacle and its furnishings and for the holy garments. [22] Both men and women came, all whose hearts were willing. Some brought to the Lord their offerings of gold—medallions, earrings, rings from their fingers, and necklaces. They presented gold objects of every kind to the Lord.

[23] Others brought blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, fine linen, or goat hair for cloth. Some gave tanned ram skins or fine goatskin leather. [24] Others brought silver and bronze objects as their offering to the Lord. And those who had acacia wood brought it.

[25] All the women who were skilled in sewing and spinning prepared blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, and fine linen cloth, and they brought them in. [26] All the women who were

willing used their skills to spin and weave the goat hair into cloth. [27] The leaders brought onyx stones and the other gemstones to be used for the ephod and the chestpiece. [28] They also brought spices and olive oil for the light, the anointing oil, and the fragrant incense. [29] So the people of Israel—every man and woman who wanted to help in the work the Lord had given them through Moses—brought their offerings to the Lord.

[30] And Moses told them, "The Lord has chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. [31] The Lord has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, intelligence, and skill in all kinds of crafts. [32] He is able to create beautiful objects from gold, silver, and bronze. [33] He is skilled in cutting and setting gemstones and in carving wood. In fact, he has every necessary skill. [34] And the Lord has given both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach their skills to others.

[35] The Lord has given them special skills as jewelers, designers, weavers, and embroiderers in blue, purple, and scarlet yarn on fine linen cloth. They excel in all the crafts needed for the work.

[36:1] "Bezalel, Oholiab, and the other craftsmen whom the Lord has gifted with wisdom, skill, and intelligence will construct and furnish the Tabernacle, just as the Lord has commanded."

[2] So Moses told Bezalel and Oholiab to begin the work, along with all those who were specially gifted by the Lord. [3] Moses gave them the materials donated by the people for the completion of the sanctuary. Additional gifts were brought each morning. [4] But finally the craftsmen left their work to meet with Moses. [5] "We have more than enough materials on hand now to complete the job the Lord has given us to do!" they exclaimed.

[6] So Moses gave the command, and this message was sent throughout the camp: "Bring no more materials! You have already given more than enough." So the people stopped bringing their offerings. [7] Their contributions were more than enough to complete the whole project.

[8] The skilled weavers first made ten sheets from fine linen. One of the craftsmen then embroidered blue, purple, and scarlet cherubim into them. [9] Each sheet was exactly the same size—forty-two feet long and six feet wide. [10] Five of these sheets were joined together to make one set, and a second set was made of the other five. [11] Fifty blue loops were placed along the edge of the last sheet in each set. [12] The fifty loops along the edge of the first set of sheets matched the loops along the edge of the second set. [13] Then fifty gold clasps were made to connect the loops on the edge of each set. Thus the Tabernacle was joined together in one piece.

[14] Above the Tabernacle, a roof covering was made from eleven sheets of cloth made from goat hair. [15] Each sheet was exactly the same size—forty-five feet long and six feet wide. [16] The craftsmen joined five of these sheets together to make one set, and the six remaining sheets were joined to make a second set. [17] Then they made fifty loops along the edge of the last sheet in each set.

[18] They also made fifty small bronze clasps to couple the loops, so the two sets of sheets were firmly attached to each other. In this way, the roof covering was joined together in one piece. [19] Then they made two more layers for the roof covering. The first was made of tanned ram skins, and the second was made of fine goatskin leather.

[20] For the framework of the Tabernacle, they made frames of acacia wood standing on end. [21] Each frame was 15 feet high and 2 1/4 feet wide. [22] There were two pegs on each frame so they could be joined to the next frame. All the frames were made this way. [23] They made twenty frames to support the south side, [24] along with forty silver bases, two for each frame. [25] They also made twenty frames for the north side of the Tabernacle, [26] along with forty silver bases, two for each frame.

[27] The west side of the Tabernacle, which was its rear, was made from six frames, [28] plus an extra frame at each corner. [29] These corner frames were connected at the bottom and firmly attached at the top with a single ring, forming a single unit from top to bottom. They made two of these, one for each rear corner. [30] So for the west side they made a total of eight frames, along with sixteen silver bases, two for each frame.

[31] Then they made five crossbars from acacia wood to tie the frames on the south side together. [32] They made another five for the north side and five for the west side. [33] The middle crossbar of the five was halfway up the frames, along each side, running from one end to the other. [34] The frames and crossbars were all overlaid with gold. The rings used to hold the crossbars were made of pure gold.

[35] The inner curtain was made of fine linen cloth, and cherubim were skillfully embroidered into it with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [36] This curtain was then attached to four gold hooks set into four posts of acacia wood. The posts were overlaid with gold and set into four silver bases.

[37] Then they made another curtain for the entrance to the sacred tent. It was made of fine linen cloth and embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [38] This curtain was connected by five hooks to five posts. The posts with their decorated tops and bands were overlaid with gold. The five bases were molded from bronze.

[37:1] Next Bezalel made the Ark out of acacia wood. It was 3 3/4 feet long, 2 1/4 feet wide, and 2 1/4 feet high. [2] It was overlaid with pure gold inside and out, and it had a molding of gold all the way around. [3] Four gold rings were fastened to its four feet, two rings at each side. [4] Then he made poles from acacia wood and overlaid them with gold. [5] He put the poles into the rings at the sides of the Ark to carry it.

[6] Then, from pure gold, he made the Ark's cover—the place of atonement. It was 3 3/4 feet long and 2 1/4 feet wide. [7] He made two figures of cherubim out of hammered gold and placed them at the two ends of the atonement cover. [8] They were made so they were actually a part of the atonement cover—it was all one piece.

[9] The cherubim faced each other as they looked down on the atonement cover, and their wings were stretched out above the atonement cover to protect it.

[10] Then he made a table out of acacia wood, 3 feet long, 1 1/2 feet wide, and 2 1/4 feet high. [11] It was overlaid with pure gold, with a gold molding all around the edge. [12] A rim about 3 inches wide was attached along the edges of the table, and a gold molding ran around the rim. [13] Then he cast four rings of gold and attached them to the four table legs [14] next to the rim. These were made to hold the carrying poles in place. [15] He made the carrying poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold. [16] Next, using pure gold, he made the plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers to be placed on the table. These utensils were to be used in pouring out drink offerings.

[17] Then he made the lampstand, again using pure, hammered gold. Its base, center stem, lamp cups, blossoms, and buds were all of one piece. [18] The lampstand had six branches, three going out from each side of the center stem. [19] Each of the six branches held a cup shaped like an almond blossom, complete with buds and petals. [20] The center stem of the lampstand was also decorated with four almond blossoms. [21] One blossom was set beneath each pair of branches, where they extended from the center stem. [22] The decorations and branches were all one piece with the stem, and they were hammered from pure gold. [23] He also made the seven lamps, the lamp snuffers, and the trays, all of pure gold. [24] The entire lampstand, along with its accessories, was made from seventy-five pounds of pure gold.

[25] The incense altar was made of acacia wood. It was eighteen inches square and three feet high, with its corner horns made from the same piece of wood as the altar itself. [26] He overlaid the top, sides, and horns of the altar with pure gold and ran a gold molding around the edge. [27] Two gold rings were placed on opposite sides, beneath the molding, to hold the carrying poles. [28] The carrying poles were made of acacia wood and were overlaid with gold.

[29] Then he made the sacred oil, for anointing the priests, and the fragrant incense, using the techniques of the most skilled incense maker.

[38:1] The altar for burning animal sacrifices also was constructed of acacia wood. It was 7 1/2 feet square at the top and 4 1/2 feet high. [2] There were four horns, one at each of the four corners, all of one piece with the rest. This altar was overlaid with bronze. [3] Then he made all the bronze utensils to be used with the altar—the ash buckets, shovels, basins, meat hooks, and firepans. [4] Next he made a bronze grating that rested on a ledge about halfway down into the firebox. [5] Four rings were cast for each side of the grating to support the carrying poles. [6] The carrying poles themselves were made of acacia wood and were overlaid with bronze. [7] These poles were inserted into the rings at the side of the altar. The altar was hollow and was made from planks.

[8] The bronze washbasin and its bronze pedestal were cast from bronze mirrors donated by the women who served at the entrance of the Tabernacle.

[9] Then he constructed the courtyard. The south wall was 150 feet long. It consisted of curtains made of fine linen. [10] There were twenty posts, each with its own bronze base, and there were silver hooks and rods to hold up the curtains. [11] The north wall was also 150 feet long, with twenty bronze posts and bases and with silver hooks and rods. [12] The west end was 75 feet wide. The walls were made from curtains supported by ten posts and bases and with silver hooks and rods. [13] The east end was also 75 feet wide.

[14] The courtyard entrance was on the east side, flanked by two curtains. The curtain on the right side was 22 1/2 feet long and was supported by three posts set into three bases. [15] The curtain on the left side was also 22 1/2 feet long and was supported by three posts set into three bases. [16] All the curtains used in the courtyard walls were made of fine linen. [17] Each post had a bronze base, and all the hooks and rods were silver. The tops of the posts were overlaid with silver, and the rods to hold up the curtains were solid silver.

[18] The curtain that covered the entrance to the courtyard was made of fine linen cloth and embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. It was 30 feet long and 7 1/2 feet high, just like the curtains of the courtyard walls. [19] It was supported by four posts set into four bronze bases. The tops of the posts were overlaid with silver, and the hooks and rods were also made of silver.

[20] All the tent pegs used in the Tabernacle and courtyard were made of bronze.

[21] Here is an inventory of the materials used in building the Tabernacle of the Covenant. Moses directed the Levites to compile the figures, and Ithamar son of Aaron the priest served as recorder. [22] Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, was in charge of the whole project, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. [23] He was assisted by Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, a craftsman expert at engraving, designing, and embroidering blue, purple, and scarlet yarn on fine linen cloth.

[24] The people brought gifts of gold totaling about 2,200 pounds, all of which was used throughout the Tabernacle.

[25] The amount of silver that was given was about 7,545 pounds. [26] It came from the tax of one-fifth of an ounce of silver collected from each of those registered in the census. This included all the men who were twenty years old or older, 603,550 in all. [27] The 100 bases for the frames of the sanctuary walls and for the posts supporting the inner curtain required 7,500 pounds of silver, about 75 pounds for each base. [28] The rest of the silver, about 45 pounds, was used to make the rods and hooks and to overlay the tops of the posts.

[29] The people also brought 5,310 pounds of bronze,

[30] which was used for casting the bases for the posts at the entrance to the Tabernacle, and for the bronze altar with its bronze grating and altar utensils. [31] Bronze was also used to make the bases for the posts that supported the curtains around the courtyard, the bases for the curtain at the entrance of the courtyard, and all the tent pegs used to hold the curtains of the courtyard in place.

[39:1] For the priests, the craftsmen made beautiful garments of blue, purple, and scarlet cloth—clothing to be worn while ministering in the Holy Place. This same cloth was used for Aaron's sacred garments, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[2] The ephod was made from fine linen cloth and embroidered with gold thread and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [3] A skilled craftsman made gold thread by beating gold into thin sheets and cutting it into fine strips. He then embroidered it into the linen with the blue, purple, and scarlet yarn.

[4] They made two shoulder-pieces for the ephod, which were attached to its corners so it could be tied down. [5] They also made an elaborate woven sash of the same materials: fine linen cloth; blue, purple, and scarlet yarn; and gold thread, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. [6] The two onyx stones, attached to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, were set in gold filigree. The stones were engraved with the names of the tribes of Israel, just as initials are engraved on a seal. [7] These stones served as reminders to the Lord concerning the people of Israel. All this was done just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[8] The chestpiece was made in the same style as the ephod, crafted from fine linen cloth and embroidered with gold thread and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [9] It was doubled over to form a pouch, nine inches square. [10] Four rows of gemstones were set across it. In the first row were a red carnelian, a chrysolite, and an emerald. [11] In the second row were a turquoise, a sapphire, and a white moonstone.

[12] In the third row were a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. [13] In the fourth row were a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. Each of these gemstones was set in gold. [14] The stones were engraved like a seal, each with the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

[15] To attach the chestpiece to the ephod, they made braided cords of pure gold. [16] They also made two gold rings and attached them to the top corners of the chestpiece. [17] The two gold cords were put through the gold rings on the chestpiece, [18] and the ends of the cords were tied to the gold settings on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod. [19] Two more gold rings were attached to the lower inside corners of the chestpiece next to the ephod.

[20] Then two gold rings were attached to the ephod near the sash. [21] Blue cords were used to attach the bottom rings of the chestpiece to the rings on the ephod. In this way, the chestpiece was held securely to the ephod above the beautiful sash. All this was done just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[22] The robe of the ephod was woven entirely of blue yarn, [23] with an opening for Aaron's head in the middle of it. The edge of this opening was reinforced with a woven collar, so it would not tear. [24] Pomegranates were attached to the bottom edge of the robe. These were finely crafted of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [25] Bells of pure gold were placed between the pomegranates along the hem of the robe, [26] with bells and pomegranates alternating all around the hem. This robe was to be worn when Aaron ministered to the Lord, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[27] Tunics were then made for Aaron and his sons from fine linen cloth. [28] The turban, the headdresses, and the underclothes were all made of this fine linen.

[29] The sashes were made of fine linen cloth and embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. [30] Finally, they made the sacred medallion of pure gold to be worn on the front of the turban. Using the techniques of an engraver, they inscribed it with these words: Set Apart as Holy to the Lord. [31] This medallion was tied to the turban with a blue cord, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[32] And so at last the Tabernacle was finished. The Israelites had done everything just as the Lord had commanded Moses. [33] And they brought the entire Tabernacle to Moses: the sacred tent with all its furnishings, the clasps, frames, crossbars, posts, and bases; [34] the layers of tanned ram skins and fine goatskin leather; the inner curtain that enclosed the Most Holy Place; [35] the Ark of the Covenant and its carrying poles; the Ark's cover—the place of atonement; [36] the table and all its utensils; the Bread of the Presence;

[37] the gold lampstand and its accessories; the lamp cups and the oil for lighting; [38] the gold altar; the anointing oil; the fragrant incense; the curtain for the entrance of the sacred tent; [39] the bronze altar; the bronze grating; its poles and utensils; the large washbasin and its pedestal; [40] the curtains for the walls of the courtyard and the posts and bases holding them up; the curtain at the courtyard entrance; the cords and tent pegs; all the articles used in the operation of the Tabernacle; [41] the beautifully crafted garments to be worn while ministering in the Holy Place—the holy garments for Aaron the priest and for his sons to wear while on duty.

[42] So the people of Israel followed all of the Lord's instructions to Moses.

[43] Moses inspected all their work and blessed them because it had been done as the Lord had commanded him.

[40:1] The Lord now said to Moses, [2] "Set up the Tabernacle on the first day of the new year. [3] Place the Ark of the Covenant inside, and install the inner curtain to enclose the Ark within the Most Holy Place. [4] Then bring in the table, and arrange the utensils on it. And bring in the lampstand, and set up the lamps.

[5] "Place the incense altar just outside the inner curtain, opposite the Ark of the Covenant. Set up the curtain made for the entrance of the Tabernacle. [6] Place the altar of burnt offering in front of the Tabernacle entrance. [7] Set the large washbasin between the Tabernacle and the altar and fill it with water. [8] Then set up the courtyard around the outside of the tent, and hang the curtain for the courtyard entrance.

[9] "Take the anointing oil and sprinkle it on the Tabernacle and on all its furnishings to make them holy. [10] Sprinkle the anointing oil on the altar of burnt offering and its utensils, sanctifying them. Then the altar will become most holy. [11] Next anoint the large washbasin and its pedestal to make them holy.

[12] "Bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tabernacle, and wash them with water. [13] Clothe Aaron with the holy garments and anoint him, setting him apart to serve me as a priest. [14] Then bring his sons and dress them in their tunics. [15] Anoint them as you did their father, so they may serve me as priests. With this anointing, Aaron's descendants are set apart for the priesthood forever, from generation to generation."

[16] Moses proceeded to do everything as the Lord had commanded him. [17] So the Tabernacle was set up on the first day of the new year. [18] Moses put it together by setting its frames into their bases and attaching the crossbars and raising the posts. [19] Then he spread the coverings over the Tabernacle framework and put on the roof layers, just as the Lord had commanded him.

[20] He placed inside the Ark the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, and then he attached the Ark's carrying poles. He also set the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—on top of it. [21] Then he brought the Ark of the Covenant into the Tabernacle and set up the inner curtain to shield it from view, just as the Lord had commanded.

[22] Next he placed the table in the Tabernacle, along the north side of the Holy Place, just outside the inner curtain. [23] And he arranged the Bread of the Presence on the table that stands before the Lord, just as the Lord had commanded.

[24] He set the lampstand in the Tabernacle across from the table on the south side of the Holy Place. [25] Then he set up the lamps in the Lord's presence, just as the Lord had commanded. [26] He also placed the incense altar in the Tabernacle, in the Holy Place in front of the inner curtain. [27] On it he burned the fragrant incense made from sweet spices, just as the Lord had commanded.

[28] He attached the curtain at the entrance of the Tabernacle, [29] and he placed the altar of burnt offering near the Tabernacle entrance. On it he offered a burnt offering and a grain offering, just as the Lord had commanded.

[30] Next he placed the large washbasin between the Tabernacle and the altar. He filled it with water so the priests could use it to wash themselves. [31] Moses and Aaron and Aaron's sons washed their hands and feet in the basin. [32] Whenever they walked past the altar to enter the Tabernacle, they were to stop and wash, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[33] Then he hung the curtains forming the courtyard around the Tabernacle and the altar. And he set up the curtain at the entrance of the courtyard. So at last Moses finished the work.

[34] Then the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glorious presence of the Lord filled it. [35] Moses was no longer able to enter the Tabernacle because the cloud had settled down over it, and the Tabernacle was filled with the awesome glory of the Lord.

[36] Now whenever the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle and moved, the people of Israel would set out on their journey, following it.

[37] But if the cloud stayed, they would stay until it moved again. [38] The cloud of the Lord rested on the Tabernacle during the day, and at night there was fire in the cloud so all the people of Israel could see it. This continued throughout all their journeys.

MEGATHEMES

THEME: Slavery

EXPLANATION:

The Israelites were slaves for 400 years. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, oppressed them cruelly. They prayed to God for deliverance from this system.

IMPORTANCE:

Like the Israelites, we need both human and divine leadership to escape from the slavery of sin. After their escape, the memory of slavery helped the Israelites learn to treat others generously. We need to stand against those who oppress others.

THEME: Rescue/Redemption

EXPLANATION:

God rescued Israel through the leader Moses and through mighty miracles. The Passover celebration was an annual reminder of their escape from slavery.

IMPORTANCE:

God delivers us from the slavery of sin. Jesus Christ celebrated the Passover with his disciples at the Last Supper and then went on to rescue us from sin by dying in our place.

THEME: Guidance

EXPLANATION:

God guided Israel out of Egypt by using the plagues, Moses' heroic courage, the miracle of the Red Sea, and the Ten Commandments. God is a trustworthy guide.

IMPORTANCE:

Although God is all-powerful and can do miracles, he normally leads us by wise leadership and team effort. His words give us the wisdom to make daily decisions and govern our lives.

THEME: Ten Commandments

EXPLANATION:

God's law system had three parts. The Ten Commandments were the first part, containing the absolutes of spiritual and moral life. The civil law was the second part, giving the people rules to manage their lives. The ceremonial law was the third part, showing them patterns for building the tabernacle and regular worship.

IMPORTANCE:

God was teaching Israel the importance of choice and responsibility. When they obeyed the conditions of the law, he blessed them; if they forgot or disobeyed, he punished them or allowed calamities to come. Many great countries of the world base their laws on the moral system set up in the book of Exodus. God's moral law is valid today.

THEME: The Nation

EXPLANATION:

God founded the nation of Israel to be the source of truth and salvation to all the world. His relationship to his people was loving yet firm. The Israelites had no army, schools, governors, mayors, or police when they left Egypt. God had to instruct them in their constitutional laws and daily practices. He showed them how to worship and how to have national holidays.

IMPORTANCE:

Israel's newly formed nation had all the behavioral characteristics of Christians today. We are often disorganized, sometimes rebellious, and sometimes victorious. God's Person and Word are still our only guide. If our churches reflect his leadership, they will be effective in serving him.

TIMELINE

Joseph dies 1805 B.C. (1640 B.C.)
Moses born 1526 (1350)
Exodus from Egypt 1446 (1280)
Ten Commandments given 1445 (1279)
Israel enters Canaan 1406 (1240)
Judges begin to rule 1375 (1220)

An invitation is given to open your heart's door.

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print